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5

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THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
GEOFF. CHAUCER.
IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

THE MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

From Urry's Edition 1721,

THE CANTERBURY TALES

From Tyrwhitt's Edition 1775.

Grete well CHAUCER when ye mete----

Of ditees and of longer glade,

The which he----maie,

The londe fulfilled is over all.

GOWER.

My malster CHAUCER----chiefe poete of Bretayne----

Whom all this londe schulde of ryght preferre,

Sith of our langage he was the lode-sterre----

That made first to dytyle and rayne

The gold dewe dropys of speche and eloquence

Into our tunge through his excellence.

LYDGATE.

The honour of English tong is dede----

My mayster CHAUCER, floure of eloquence,

Mirroure of fructuous entement,

Unversel fadir in science----

This lordis verray tresour and richesse----

The firste synder of our fayre langage.

OCCLEVE.

Venerabili CHAUCER, principall poete but pere,

Mervailly trumpet, orlege and reguler,

In eloquence balme, coudist and diall,

Myky fontaine, clere strand, and rois riall,

Of fresche endite throw Albion island brail.

DOUGLAS.

O reverend CHAUCER ! rois of rethouris all,

As in oure tong flour imperial

That raise in Britane ever, quha reidis right

Thou beiris of Makers the triumphs royall,

The fresche enamill termes celestiall:

This mater couth half illuminit full bricht,

Was thou sucht, of our Ingills all the light,

Sermounting every tong terrestriall

As far as May's morrow dois midnight.

DUNBAR.

VOL. IX.

EDINBURG:

AT THE *Apello Press*, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1782.



THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
GEOFFREY CHAUCER.
VOL. IX.

6
A

CONTAINING HIS
MISCELLANEOUS PIECES, viz.
TROILUS AND CRESEIDE.

But natheles certain
I can right now no thrifty Tale sain,
But CHAUCER, (though he can but lewedly
On metres and on riming craftily)
Hath sayd hem in swiche English as he can
Of olde time, as knoweth many a man;
And if he have not sayd hem, leve brother,
In o book, he hath sayd hem in another----

Dan CHAUCER, well of English undeht'd,
On Fame's eternal bead-roll worthy to be shid'----
Old Dan Geffrey, in whose gentle spright
The pure well-head of poetry did dwell----
He whilst he lived was the soveraigne head
Of shepherds all-----

Old CHAUCER, like the morning star,
To us discovers day from far;
His light those mists and clouds dissolv'd
Which our dark nation long involv'd;
But he descending to the shades
Darkness again the age invades.

SPENSER.

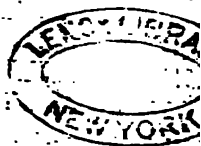
CHAUCER, him who first with harmony inform'd
The language of our fathers---His legends blithe
He sang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
Of homely life, thro' each estate and age
The fashions and the follies of the world
With cunning hand portraying-----

DENHAM.

Him who in times-----
Dark and untought began with charming verse
To tame the rudeness of his native land.

AKENSIDE.

EDINBURG:
The Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.
Anno 1782.



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MISCELLANIES.

TROILUS AND CRESEIDE.

IN FIVE BOOKES.

PROCÆMIUM LIBRI TERTII.

O Blisfull light! of whiche the bemis clere
Adornith allè the third hevin faire,
O sonn'is life! o Jov'is doughtir dere!
Pleaunce of love! o godely debonaire!
In gentle hertes aie redy to repaire,
O very cause of hele and of gladnesse,
Meried be thy might and thy godenesse! 7

In heven and hell, in yerth and the salt se,
Is felt thy might, if that I well discerne,
As man, brid, beste, fishe, herbe, and grenè tre,
Thei sele in timis with vapour eterne:
God lovith, and to love he woll naught werne;
And in this worldè no liv'is cature
Withoutin love is wroucht or maie endure. 14

Ye, Jovis, first to thilke affe&is glade,
Through whiche that thingis livin all and be,
Commendidin and amorous him made
On mortall thing, and as ye list aie ye
Yeve him in love ese or adversite,
And in a thoufande formis doune him sent
For love in yerth, and whom you list he hent. 21

Ye fiers Mars, apoin of his ire,
 And as you list ye makein hertis digne,
 Algate them that ye woll set a fire
 Thei dredin shame, and vici thei religne;
 Ye doen 'hem curteis be, freshe, and benigne,
 And hic or lowe astir a wight entendeth
 The joyis that he hath your might it sendeth: 28

Ye holdis reigne and hould in writte,
 Ye sothfast cause of frendship ben alse;
 Ye knowin all chaikes covered qualite
 Of thingis whiche that folke on wonderin fo
 Whan thei can nat construe how is maie go
 She lovith him, or why he lovith here,
 As why this she nat that comith to were. 33

Ye folke a lawe have set in univérse,
 And this knowe I by them that lovirs be,
 That who so servith wish you hath the werse;
 Now ladie bright, for thy benignite,
 At reverence of them that servis the,
 Whose clerke I am, so techith me divise
 Some joie of that is felt in thy service 38

Ye in my nakid hert is sentiment
 Inhilde, and doe me shewe of thy swetenesse,
 Caliope! thy voice be now present,
 For now is nede; seest thou nat my distresse
 How I mote tell anon right the gladnesse
 Of Troilus to Venus herying? 43
 To whiche gladnesse who nede hath God him bring!

Explicit proœmium.

INCIPIT LIBER TERTIUS.

All this mene while this sad Troilus
 cording his lesson in this manere,
 seie, thought he, thus woll I saie and thus,
 us woll I plain unto my ladie dere,
 it worde is gode, and this shall be my chere,
 s n'ill I nat foryetin in no wise:
 I leve him werkin as he can devise. 56
 And, Lorde! so that his herte began to quappe
 ing her come, and shert gan for to like;
 I Pandarus, that ledde her by the lappe,
 ne nere, and gan in at the curtein pike,
 I saied, God doe hote on all that are like!
 who is here you comin to visite;
 here is she that is your deth to wite. 63
 herewith it semid as he wept almoste.
 ! quod Troilus, so routhfully,
 ere me be, wo o mightie God! thou wote:
 o is all there I se nat truily.
 (quod Creseide) it is Pandare and I,
 swete herte, alas! I maie nat rise
 knele, and doe you honour in some wise. 70
 And dreslid him upward; and she right tho
 both her hondis soft upon him leie.
 for the love of God doe ye not so
 me! (quod she.) Ey, what is this to sei!
 comen' am I to you for causis tweie,
 to you to thonke, and of your lordshipe etc
 itinuaunce I wouldè you beseeke. 77

This Troilus, that herd his ladie praie
 Of lordship, him woxe neithir quick ne dedde,
 Ne might o worde for shame unto it saie,
 Although, men shouldin smitin of his hedde,
 But, Lorde! so he woxe sodainliche alle redde;
 And, Sir, his lesson that he wendè conne
 To prayin her is through his wit ironne. 8

Creseide all this espyid well inough,
 For she was wise, and loved him ner the lasse,
 All n'ere he' in all aperte, or made it tough,
 Or was to bolde to sing a fol'is masse;
 But whan his shame began somewhat to passe
 His resons, as I maie my rimis holde,
 I woll you tell as techin bokis olde. 9

In chaungid voice, right for his very drede,
 Whiche voiee eke quoke, and therto his maners
 Godelic abash't, and now his hewis rede
 Now pale, unto Creseide his ladie dere,
 With loke doune cast and humble yoldin there,
 Lo the aldirfirst worde that him asterte
 Was twyis, Mercie, mercie, my dere herte! 5

And stint a while, and whan he might out bring
 The nextè word, was, God wote for I have
 As faithfully as I have had konning
 Ben your'is all, God so my soule save,
 And shall, till that I wofull wight be grave,
 And though I dare no can unto you plain
 Iwis I suffer not the lasse pain. 10

Thus meche as now, th womanliche wife!
 I maie out bring, and if this you displese ..
 That shall I wreke upon mine owne life
 Right sone I trowe, and doe your herte an ese,
 If with my deth your hert I maie apse;
 But sens that ye han herd me somewhat sey
 Now retche I nevir how sone that I deie. 112

Therwith his manly sorowe to beholde
 It might have made an herte of stone to raw,
 And Pandare wept as he to watir would,
 And pokid evir his nace newe and newe,
 And sayid, Wo begon ben hertis true;
 For love of God make of this thing an ende,
 Or flea us both at ones er that ye wande. 113

I, what? (quod she,) By God and by my trouth
 I n'ot nevir what ye wilne that I seie.
 Eie! what? (quod he) that ye have on him routh
 For Godd'is love, and deeth him nat to deie,
 Now than thus, (quod she) I wollin him preie
 To tellin me the fine of his entente;
 Yet wist I nevir well what that he mente. 114

What that I mene, o my swete hert! dere!
 (Quod Troilus) o godely freshe and fre!
 That with the strengis of your eyin clere
 Ye wouldin somtime frendly on me se,
 And than agrein that I maie han ho
 Withoutin braunche of vice on any wise
 In trouthe alwaie to do you my servise, 115

As to my ladie right, and chefe resort,
 With all my witte and all my diligence,
 And I to have right as you list comfort,
 Under your yerde egall to mine offence,
 As deth, if that I brekin your defence,
 And that ye digne me so mochil honour
 Me to commaundin aught in any hour,

141

And I to ben your very humble, true,
 Secrete, and in my painis pacient,
 And evir to desirin freshly newe
 To servin, and ben aie like diligent,
 And with gode herte all wholly your talent
 Recevin in grete, how fore that me smerte :
 Lo, this mene I, o mine owne swete herte !

142

(*Quod Pandarus*) Lo ! here an hard request,
 And reso'nable a ladie for to werne ;
 Now heere mine, by Natall Jov'is fest,
 Were I a god ye shouldin sterve as yerne,
 That herin well this man wol nothing yerne
 But your honor, and sene him almoste sterve,
 And ben so lothe to suffre' him you to serve.

154

With that she gan her eyin on him cast
 Full esily and full debonairly,
 Avising her, and hied her not to fast
 With ner a words, but saied him softly,
 Mine honour safe I woll well truly,
 And in soche forme as ye can now devise,
 Retevin him fully to my service ;

16

ing him, for Godd'is love, that he
 honour of trouth and gentillnesse,
 mene; eke menin well to me,
 : honour with wit and businesse
 ; and if I maie doen him gladnesse
 nisforthe iwis I n'ill not faine :
 e all whole, no lengir ye ne plain. 168
 thelesse this warne I you, (quod she ;
 sonne although ye be iwis,
 all no more have soverainte :
 love than right in that case is,
 forbere if ye doen amis
 in you; and while that ye me serve
 you right aftir that ye deserve. 175
 ortily, dere herte, and all my knight !
 I, and drawith you to lustinesse,
 ll truely, with all my full might,
 ir tourin all to swetinesse,
 that maie do you gladnesse ;
 7 wo ye shall recovir blisse,
 in amis toke, and gan him kisse. 182
 ndarus on knees, and up his eyen
 threwe, and helde his hondis hie ;
 ll god ! (quod he) that maiest not dien,
 of this thou maist the glorifie,
 us, thou maist makin melodie :
 n honde me semish that in tounce
 miracle I here seche bell soune. 189

But ho! no more now of this ilke matere;
 For why? this folke well comin up anone
 That have the lettir redde; so! I 'hem here;
 But I conjure the Creseide anone,
 And thou to Troilus, whan thou maist gone,
 That at mynt howse ye ben at my warning,
 For I full well shall shapen your coming; 146

And with there your hertis right enough,
 And let se whiche of you shall bere the boll
 To speke of love, and right therwith be lough,
 For there have ye a list for to tell.
 (Quod Troilus) How long shall I here dwell
 Er this be doen? Quod he, Whan thou maist rise
 This thing shall be right as you list devise. 150

With that Helen and also Deiphobus
 Tho comin upward, right at the faire's ende,
 And, Lorde! so the gan gyvenin Troilus,
 His brothir and his fustir for to blende.
 (Quod Pandarus) It time is that we wende;
 Take, necè mine, your leve at them all thre,
 And let 'hem speke, and comith forth with me. 156

She toke her leve at 'hem full chastyty,
 As she well could, and thei her reverence
 Unto the full ydiddin hertity,
 And wondir well spekin in her absence
 Of her, in praisyn of her excellence,
 Her govirnaunce, her wit, and her manere
 Commendidin, that it joie was to here. 161

Now let her wende unto her owne place,
 And tournin we to Troilus againe,
 That gan full lightly of the lettir pace
 That Deiphobus had in the gardine faine,
 And of Helen and of him he would feine
 Delivirid ben, and saied that him left
 To slepe, and astir talis have a rest.

156

224

Helen him kist, and toke her leve as blive,
 Deiphobus eke, and home went every wight,
 And Pandarus as faste as he maie drive
 To Troilus tho came as linè right,
 And on a paillet all that gladè night
 By Troilus he laie with merie chere,
 And well was them that thei werin yfere.

e

158

231

Whan every wight was voidid but thei two,
 And all the doris werin fast ishet,
 To tell in short, withoutin wordis mo,
 This Pandarus withoutin any let
 Up rose, and on his bedd'is side him set,
 And gan to spekin in a sobir wise
 To Troilus as I shall you devise.

160

238

Mine aldirlevist Lorde, and brothir dere!
 God wot and thou that it fate me so fore
 Whan I the sawe so languishing to yere
 For love, of whiche thy wo woxt alwaie more,
 That I with all my might and all my lore
 Have ever sithin doen my businesse
 To bringin the to joie out of distresse;

17

245

And have it brought to soche plite as thou wost
So that through me thou stoodist now in waie
To farin well; I saie it for no boft;
And wost thou why? but shame it is to saie,
For the have I begon a game to plaie
Whiche that I nevir doen shall eft for other,
Altho he were a thousande fold my brother;

254

That is to saie, for the am I become,
Betwixin game and ernest, soche a mene
As makin women unto men to come,
All saie I nat, thou wost well what I mene,
For the have I my nece, of vicia clone,
So fully made thy gentillnesse so trist
That all shall ben right as thy selfin list.

259

But God, that all wotteth, take I to witnesse
That nevir this for covetise I wrought,
But onely for an abredge that distresse
For whiche well nie thou deydist, as me thought;
But, gode brothir, doith now as the ought
For Godd'is love, and kepe her out of blame,
Sins thou art wise, and save alwaie her name:

264

For wel thou woste the name as yet of her
Emonges the peple' as (who saith) hallowed is,
For that man is unbore, I dare well swere,
That evir wist that she yet did amis:
But wo is me that I that cause all this
Maie thinkin that she is my nece dere,
And I her eme, and traitour eke ifere.

271

And wer it wist that I through mine engine
 Had in my nece iput this fantasie
 To doen thy lust, and wholly to be thine,
 Why, all the worlde wouldin upon it crie,
 And sayin that I the worst trecherie
 Did in this case that evir was begon,
 And she fordon, and thou right nought iwon. 280

Wherefore er I woll ferthir gone or paas
 Yet este I the bestche and fully saie
 That privity go with us in this caus,
 That is to saine, that thou us never wraie;
 And be not wrothe though I the oftyn praie
 To holdin secre soche an high matter,
 For skilfull is (thou woste well) my praier. 287

And thinke what wo there hath betid er this
 For making of avauntis, as men rede,
 And what mischaunce in this worlde yet there is
 Fro daie to daie right for that wickid dede,
 For whiche these wise clerkis that ben dede
 Have evir this proverb to us young,
 That *The first vertue is to kepe the tung.* 294

And n'ere it that I wilne as now abredge
 Diffusion of speche, I could almoſte
 A thousande olden stories the aledge
 Of women losse through false and fol's boſte;
 Proverbis canst thy self inow, and woste
 Aye nist that vice for to ben a blabbe
 All ſaied men ſothe, as oftyn as thei gabbe. 301

O tongue, alas! so oftin here before
 Hast thou made many' a ladie bright of hewe
 Saied, ~~Welawne the daie that I was bore!~~
 And many' a maidins for ~~owne~~ for to newe;
 And for the more parte all is but untrue
 That men of yelpes and it wer brought to preve;
 Of kinde none avauntour is to leve.

Avauntour and a lier all is one,
 As thus; I suppose a woman graunt me
 Her love, and saith that othin woll she none,
 And I am sworne to holdin it secrete,
 And aftir I goe tell it two or thre;
 I wis I am a vauntour at the lest,
 And lier ake, for I breke my behest.

Now lokeith than if thei be not to blame
 So che manir folk, what shal I clepe 'hem, what?
 'That 'hem account of women, and by name,
 'That yet behight 'hem never this ne that,
 Ne knowin 'hem be more than mine olde hat:
 No wondir is, for God me fradin hele,
 Though women dreadin wish us men to dele.

I saie nat this for no mistrust of you,
 Ne for no wise men, but for folis nice,
 And for the harme that in the worlde is now
 As well for folie oft as for malice,
 For well wote I that in wise folk that vice
 No woman drat, if she be well awised,
 For *Wise men bee by folie harme chastised.*

But now to purpose, leuè brothir dere!
Have all this thing that I have saied in minde,
And kepe the close, and be now of gode chere,
For all thy daies thou shalt me true yfinde;
I shall thy processe set in soche a kinde,
And God toforme, that it shall the suffice,
For it shall be right as thou wolt devise. 336

For well I wote thou menist well parde,
Therefore I dare this fully undirtake;
Thou wost eke what thy ladie grauntid the;
And daie is set the charteris to make:
Have now gode night, I maie no lengir wake,
And bid for me, sith thou art now in blisse,
That God me sendè deth or sonè liffe. 343

Who might ytellin halfe the joie of feste
Whiche that the soule of Troilus tho felte!
Hering the' effect of Pandarus behest
His oldè wo, that made his herte to swelt,
Gan tho for joie to wastin and to melt,
And all the reheting of his likes fore
At onis fled, he felt of 'hem no more; 350

But right so as these holtes and these hayis
That han in wintir dedde yben and drie
Revestin 'hem in grene whan that Maie is,
Whan every lustie beste listith to pleie,
Right in that selfin wist, soþe for to seie,
Woxe sodainly his hertè full of joie,
That gladdir was therè nevir man in Troie; 357

And gas his leake on Pandarums up cast:
 Full sobirly, and frendly en to he,
 And sayid, Frange, in Aprilis the last,
 As well thou wost, if it remembir the,
 How nigh the deth for we thou founde me,
 And how thou diddist all thy businesse
 To knowe of me the cause of my distresse;

364

Thou wost how long I it forbare to saie.
 To the that art the man that I best trust,
 And perill mean to the to bewraie,
 That wist I wel; but tell me if the list,
 Sith I se the way that thy self it wist,
 How durst I not tell of this matter
 That quake now the me wight maie as here?

371

But nathelesse, by that God I the swere,
 That as him list maie all this world governe,
 And if I lie Achilles with his spere
 Mine hert do cleve, all were my life eterne,
 As I am mortall, if I late or yerne
 Would it bewraie, or durst, or should, or conne;
 For all the gode that God made undir sonne;

378

That rather die I would and determines,
 As thinkith me now, stockid in prison,
 In wretchidnesse, in sleho, and in vermin;
 Captive to cruill King Agamemnon;
 And this in all the temples of this toun,
 Upon the goddis all, I woll the swere,
 To morowe daie, if that the likith here.

385

And that thou hast so moche idoen for me
That I ne maie it nevirmore deserve
This knowe I well, all might I now for the
A thousande timis on a morowe serve ;
I can no more but that I woll the serve
Right as thine own slave, whithir so thou wende,
For evirmore unto my liv'is ende. 392

But here with al mine herte I the beseeche
That nevir in me thou deme soche folie,
As I shall saine, me thought by thy speche,
That this whiche thou me doest for companie
I should wenin it were a bauderie ;
I am not wode all if I leude ybe :
It is nat so, that wote I well parde. 399

But he that goeth for gold or for richeffe
On soche meffagis, call him what ye list,
And this that thou doest, call it gentilnesse,
Compassion, and felowship, and trist,
Departin it so, for widewhere is wist
How that there is diversite requered
Betwixin thingis like, as I have lered. 406

And that thou knowe I ne thinke not ne wene
That this service a shame be or a jape,
I have my faire suster Polyxene,
Cassandra', Helen, or any of the fraye,
Be she nevir so faire or well ishape,
Tell me whiche thou wilt of everichone
To have for thine, and let me than alone. 413

But sith that thou hast doen me this service
My life to save, and for non hope of mede,
So for the love of God this grete emprise
Performe it out, for now is the moste nede;
For high and lowe, withoutin any drede,
I woll alwaie thine hestis allè kepe:
Have now gode night, and let us bothè slepe.

Thus helde 'hem eche of othir well apaied,
That all the worlde ne might it bet amende,
And on the morowe, whan thei were araied
Eche to his ownè nedis gan entende;
But Troilus, though as the fire he brende
For sharpe desire of hope and of plesaunce;
He not forgate his gode wife govirnaunce;

But in himself with manhode gan restrain
Eche rakill dede and eche unbridlid chere,
That all tho that livin, sothe for toaine,
Ne should have wiste by worde or by manere
What that he ment as touching this matere,
From every wight as ferre as is the cloud,
He was so wise, and wel dissimu'len coud.

And all the while whiche that I now devise
This was his life, with all his fullè might,
By daie he was in Mart'is high service,
That is to sayn, in armis as a knight,
And fore the more part all the longè night
He lay and thought how that he might yserve
His ladie beste, her thanke for to deserve.

N'ill I not swerin, although he laie soft,
 That in his thought he n'as somewhat disefed,
 Ne that he tournid on his pillowes oft,
 And would of that him missid have ben esed;
 But in soche case men be nat alwaie plesed
 For aught I wotè, no more than was he,
 That can I deme of possibilitè. **448**

But certain is, to purpose for to go,
 That in this while, as writtin is in geste,
 He sawe his ladie somtime, and also
 She with him spake whan that she durst and leste,
 And by ther both avise, as was the beste,
 Appoinctidin full warely in this nede,
 So as thei durst, how thei wouldin procede. **455**

But it was spokiu in so thort a wise,
 In soche awaite alwaie, and in soche fere,
 Lest any wight devinin or devise
 Would of 'hem two, or to it laie an ere,
 That all this worlde so lese to 'hem ne were
 As that Cupido would 'hem his grace sende
 To makin of ther purpose right an ende. **462**

But thilkè little that thei spake or wrought
 His wise ghooste toke aie of all soche hede,
 It semid her he wistè what she thought
 Withoutin worde, so that it was no nede.
 To bid him aught to doen or aught forbede,
 For which she thought that love, al come it late,
 Of allè joie had openid her the yate. **469**

And shortly to this proceſſe for to pace,
So well his werke and wordis he beſet
That he ſo full ſtoode in his ladie's grace
That twentie thouſande tymes er ſhe let
She thonkid God ſhe evir with him met;
So could he him governe in ſoche ſervice
That all the worlde ne might it bet deviſe:
 For why? ſhe founde him ſo diſcrete in all,
 So ſecrete, and eke of ſoche obeiſaunce,
 That well ſhe felt he was to her a wall
 Of ſteele, and ſhelde from every diſpleſaunce,
 That to yben in his gode govirnaunce,
 So wiſe he was, ſhe was no more aſered,
 I mene as ferre as it ought ben requered.

And Pandarus to quicke alwaie the fire
 Was evir ilike preſt and diligent;
 To eſe his frende was ſet al his deſire;
 He ſhove aie on; he to and fro was ſent,
 He lettir**de** bare whan Troilus was abſent,
 That nev**er** man as in his frend's nede
 Ne bare him bet than he withoutin drede.

But now para'venture ſome man waitin wol
 That every worde or ſonde, or loke or chere,
 Of Troilus that I reherci**n** ſtrold,
 In al this while unto his lady dere,
 I trowe it were a long thing for to here,
 Or of what wight that ſton**te** in ſuche diſſointe
 His wordis al or every loke to pointe.

Forsothe I have not herde it done er this
In storie none, ne no man here I wene,
And though I would yet I could not iwia,
For there was some epistel 'hem betwene
That would (as faith min auctor) wel contene
Nie halfe this boke, of which him list not write;
How should I than a line of it endite?

504

But to the gret effecte than saie I thus,
That stonding in concorde and in quiete
This ilke two, Creseide and Troilus,
As I have tolde, and in this tyme swete,
Save onely oftyn mightin thei not mete,
Ne leisir have ther spechis to fulfell,
That it befil right as I shal you tell,

511

That Pandarus, that evir did his might
Right for the fine that I shal speke of here,
As for to bringin to his house some night
His faire nece and Troilus ifere,
Where as at leisir al this high matere
Touching her love were at the ful up bounde,
Had out of douts a time to it yfounde:

518

For he with grete deliberacion
Had every thing that therto might availle
Forne cast. and put in execution,
And neithir leste for coste ne for travaile;
Come if 'hem liste 'hem shoulde nothing faile,
And for to ben in aught espyid there
That wile he wel an impossible were.

525

And dreddlesse it clere was in the winde
Of every pie and evëry letgame,
Now al is wel, for al the world is blinde
In this matir bothè fremid and tame;
This timbir is al redy up to frame;
Us lackith naught but that we wetin wold
A certaine houre in whiche she comin shold.

And Troilus, that al this purveiance
Knew at the ful, and waitid on it aie,
And hereupon eke made gret ordinaunce,
And founde his cause and therwith his aray,
Yf that he were ymissid night or day,
There while he was aboutin this service,
That he was gon to don his sacrifice,

And muste at suche a temple alone wake,
Answerid of Apollo for to be,
And first to sene the holy laurir quake
Er that Apollo spake out of the tre,
To tellin him whan Grekis next should fle;
And forthy let him no man, God forbede!
But praie Apollo helpin in this nede.

Now is there litill more for to be done
But Pandare up, and, shortly for to saine,
Right sone upon the chaunging of the mone,
Whan lightlesse is the world a night or twaine,
And that the welkin shope him for to raine,
He streight amorowe unto his nece went,
Ye have wel herde the fine of his entente.

Whan he was comen' he gan anon to plaie,
As he was wont, and of himselfe to jape,
And finally he swore, and gan her saie
By this and that, she should him not escape,
No lengir done him aftir her to cape,
But certainly that she must, by her leve,
Come soun in his house with him at eve. 566

At which she lough, and gan her first excuse,
And said, It rainith, lo! how should I gone?
Let be, (quod he) ne stonde not thus to muse;
This mote be don, ye shal come there anone,
So at the last herof thei fel at one,
Or ellis soft he swore her in her ere
He n'olde nevir comin there she were. 567

Sone aftir this she unto him gan rowne,
And askid him if Troilus were there?
He swore her Nay, for he was out of towne,
And said, What, nece, I pose that he were there,
You durst nevir thereof have the more fere?
For rathir than men might him there aspie
Me levir were a thousande folde to die. 574

Naught list mine auctour fully to declare
What that she thought whan that he said her so,
That Troilus was out of tounne ifare,
And if he said therof soth or no,
But that without awaite with him to go
She grauntid him, sithe he her that besought,
And as his nece obeyid as her eught. 575

But nathèlesse yet gan she him beseche,
 Although with him to gone it was no fere,
 For to beware of gossipe peplis speche,
 That dremin thingis which that nevir were,
 And well avisin him whom he brought there;
 And said him, Eme, sene I must on you trist
 Loke al be wel; I do now as you list.

588

He swore her this by stockis and by stones,
 And by the goddis that in hevin dwell,
 Or ellis were him levir soule and bones
 With Pluto King as depè ben in hell
 As Tantalus: what shouldin I more tell?
 Whan al was wel he rose and toke his leve;
 And she to soupir came whan it was eve,

595

With a certaine nombre of her owne men,
 And with her fayir nece Antigone,
 And othir of her women nine or ten;
 But who was glad nowe, who, as trowyin ye?
 But Troilus, that stode and might it se
 Throughout a litil window in a stewe,
 Thir he beset till midnight was in mewes,

600

Unwist of every wight but of Pandare.
 But to the point. Now whan that she was come
 With al joie, and al her frendis in fare,
 Her eme anone in armis hath her nome,
 And aftir to the soupir al and some,
 Whan as time was, ful seste thei 'hem yset,
 God wot there was no deince ferre to fet.

And aftir foupir gonnin thei to rife,
At efe wel, with hertis full frefh and glade,
And wel was him that coudè beft deuiſe
To likin her, or that her laughin made :
He ſonge, ſhe plaide ; he tolde a tale of Wade ;
But at the laſt, as every thing hath ende,
She toke her leue, and nedis would thenſwende. 61

But, o Fortune! executrice of wierdes,
O influencis of theſe hevins hie !
Soth is that undir God ye ben our hierdes,
Though to us beſtis ben the cauſis wrie ;
This mene I now, for ſhe gan homward hie ;
But execute was al beſide her leue

The goddis wil, for whiche ſhe muſt bileve. 62

The bentè mone with her hornis all pale,
Saturn and Jove, in Cancro joynid were,
That fuche a raine from hevin gan availe
That every manir woman that was there
Had of that ſmoky raine a very ſcere,
At the which Pandare tho lough, and ſaid thenne,
Now were it time a lady to gone henne ? 63

But, gode nece, if that I might evir pleſe
You any thing, than pray I you (quod he)
To don mine hert as now ſo gret an efe
As for to dwell here al this night with me ;
For why ? this is your ownè houſe parde,
For by my trouthe, I ſay it nat in game,
To wende as nowe it were to me a ſhame. 64

But nathèless yet gan she him beseeche;
 Although with him to goe it was so fere,
 For to beware of gofish the peple's speche,
 That dremin thingis which that aëvir were,
 And well avisin him whom he brought there;
 And said him, Eme, sene I trust on your trift
 Loke al be wel; I do now as you list.

He swore her this by stockis and by stones,
 And by the goddis that in hevin dwell,
 Or ellis were him levir soule and bones
 With Pluto King as depè ben in hell
 As Tantalus: what shouldin I more tell?
 Whan al was wel he rose and toke his leve;
 And she to soupir came whan it was eve,

With a certaine nombre of her owne men,
 And with her fayir nece Antigone,
 And othir of her women nine or ten;
 But who was glad nowe, who, as knowyin ye?
 But Troilus, that stode and might it se
 Throughout a litil window in a stewe,
 Ther he beset till midnight was in mewe,

Unwilt of every wight but of Pandare.
 But to the point. Now whan that she was come
 With al joie, and al her frendis in fare,
 Her eme anone in armis hath her nome,
 And astir to the soupir al and some,
 Whan as time was, ful seste thei hem yset,
 And wet there was no deince ferre to fet.

And aftir foupir gonnin thei to rife,
 At efe wel, with hertis full frefh and glade,
 And wel was him that coudè beft deviſe
 To likin her, or that her laughin made :
 He ſonge, ſhe plaide ; he tolde a tale of Wade ;
 But at the laſt, as every thing hath ende,
 ſhe toke her leve, and nedis would thens wende. 616

But, o Fortune! executrice of wierdes,
 O influencis of theſe hevins hie !
 Soth is that undir God ye ben our hierdes,
 Though to us beſtis ben the cauſis wrie ;
 This mene I now, for ſhe gån homward hie ;
 But execute was al beſide her leve
 The goddis wil, for whiche ſhe muſt bileve. 623

The bentè mone with her hornis all pale,
 Saturn and Jove, in Cancro joynid were,
 That ſuche a raine from hevin gån availe
 That every manir woman that was there
 Had of that ſmoky raine a very fere,
 At the which Paudare tho lough, and ſaid thenne,
 Now were it time a lady to gone henne? 630

But, gode nece, if that I might evir pleſe
 You any thing, than pray I you (quod he)
 To don mine hert as now ſo gret an efe
 As for to dwell here al this night with me ;
 For why? this is your ownè houſe parde,
 For by my trouthe, I ſay it nat in game,
 To wende as nowe it were to me a ſhame. 637

Cresseidè, which that could as much gode
 As halfe a world, toke hede of his prayere,
 And fens it rained, and al was in a fode,
 She thought as gode chepe may I dwellin here,
 And graunt it gladly with a frend'is chere,
 And have a thonke, as grutche and than abide,
 For home to gon it may nat well betide.

I wol, (quod she) mine uncle lefe and dere!
 Sens that you list; it skil is to be so;
 I am right glad with you to dwellin here;
 I seidè but in game that I wolde goe.
 Iwis graunt mercy! necè, (quod he) tho;
 Were it a game or no, the sothe to tell,
 Now am I glad fens that you list to dwell.

Thus al is wel; but tho began aright
 The newè joy, and al the fest againe;
 But Pandarus, if godely had he might,
 He would have hyid her to bedde full faine,
 And saide, O Lorde! this is an hugè raine,
 This wère a wethir for to slepin in,
 And that I rede us sonè to begin:

And, necè, wote ye where I wol you laie?
 For that we shul nat liggin ferre asonder,
 And for ye neithir shullin, dare I saie,
 Herin the noise of rainis ne of thonder,
 By God right in my litil clofet, yonder,
 And I wol in that uttir house alone
 Ben wardain of your women everichone;

And in this middle chambre that ye fe
Shal all your women slepin wel and softe,
And there I sayid shal your selvin be,
And if ye liggin wel to night come ofte,
And carith not what wethir is alofte.
Goth in anone, and whan so that ye lest
Go we to slepe, I trowe it be the best.

672

There n'is no more, but here astir sone
Thei drank, voidid, and curtins drew anone;
Gan every wight that hadde nought to done
More in the place out of the chambre gone;
And evir more so sterneliche it rone,
And blewe therwith so wonderlichè loude,
That wel nigh no man herin othir coude.

679

Tho Pandarus her cme, right as him ought,
With women suche as were her most aboute,
Ful glad unto her bedd'is side her brought,
And toke his leve, and gan ful lowe to loute,
And said, Here at this clofet dore withoute
Right ovrthwart your women liggin all,
That whom ye list of 'hem ye maie sone call.

686

So whan that she was in the clofet laide,
And al her women forth by ordinaunce
A bedde werin, there as I have ysaide,
There n'as no more to skippin nor to prounce
But bodin go to beddè with mischaunce,
If any wight stering were any where,
And let 'hem slepin that abedde ywere.

693

But Pandarus, that wel couthe eche adde
 The olde daunce, and every point therein;
 Whan that he wiste that all thing was wele;
 He thought he wolde upon his werke begin,
 And gan the stewe dore all soft unpin,
 As still as stone, withouthin lengir lette;
 By Troilus adoun right he him sette.

And, shortly to the pointe right for to gone,
 Of al this werke he told him orde and ende,
 And sayid, Make the redy right anone,
 For thou shalt into hevin blisse ywende,
 Now blisful Venus! thou me grace yfende;
 (Quod Troilus) for nevir yet no nede
 Had I er now, ne halfindele the drede.

(Quod Pandarus) Ne drede the ner a dele,
 For it shal be right as thou wolt desire;
 So thrive I this night shal I make it wele,
 Or castin all the gruil in the fire.
 Yet, blisful Venus! this night thou me' enspire,
 (Quod Troilus) as wis as I the serve,
 And evir bet and bet shal til I sterve,

And if I had, o Venus ful of mirthe!
 Aspectis hadde of Mars or of Saturne,
 Or thou Combuste, or let were in my birth,
 Thy father pray I al thilke harme disturne
 Of grace, and that I glad aien maie turne,
 For love of him thou lovdest in the shawe,
 I mene Adon, that with the bore, was flawe:

O Iove! eke for the love of faire Europe,
 The which in form of bulle awaie thou fet;
 Now helpe, o Mars! that with thy bloody cope,
 For love of Cypria, thou me naught ne let;
 O Phœbus! think when Daphne her selve shet
 Undir the barke, and laurir woxe for drede,
 Yet for her love o helpe me at this nede!

728

O Mercurie! for the love of her eke
 For which Pallas was with Aglauros wrothe
 Now helpe; and eke Diane! I the beseke
 That this viage ne be nat to the lothe;
 O Fatall Sustrin! whiche or any clothe
 Me shapin was my decline me sponne,
 So helpith to this werke that is begonne!

735

(Quod Pandarus) Thou wretchid mouc'is hert,

Art thou agast so that she wol the bite?
 Why, do on this furred cloke upon thy sherte,
 And folowe me, for I wol have the wite,
 But bide, and let me gon before alite;
 And with that worde he gan undone a trappe,
 And Troilus he brought in by the lappe.

742

The sternè winde so loude began to route
 That no wight other'is noise might yhere,
 And thei that layin at the dore without
 Full sikirly thei sleptin all ifere;
 And Pandarus with a ful sobre chere
 Goth to the dore anon withoutin lette
 There as thei lay, and softly it shette;

749

And as he came ayenwarde privily.
 His nece awoke, and askith, Who goeth there?
 Mine ownè dere nece! (quod he) is am I,
 Ne wondristh not, ne have of it no fere;
 And nere he came, and said her in her ere,
 No worde for love of God I you beserche,
 Let no wight rise and herin of our speche. 756

What! whiche waie be ye comen? *Benedicite!*
 (Quod she) and how thus unwise of 'hem all?
 Here at this secret trappè dore (quod he.)
 (Quod tho Cresseide) Let me some wight call.
 Eigh! God forbid that it should so befall
 (Quod Pandarus) that ye such fuly wrought!
 Thei might demin thing that thei nevir thought. 763

It is nat gode a sleeping bounde to wake,
 Ne yeve a wight a cause for to devine:
 Your women flepin al I undirtake,
 So that for them the house men mightin mine,
 And flepin wollin till the sunnè shine,
 And when my tale ybrought is to an ende
 Unwist right as I came so wol I wende. 770

Now, necè mine, ye shul well undirstonde,
 (Quod he) so as ye women demin all,
 That for to holde in love a man in honde,
 And him her lefe and her dere hert to call,
 And makin him an how above a call,
 I mene, as love an othir in mene while,
 She doth her selfe a shame and him a gile. 777

Now wherby that I tellin you al this
Ye wote your selfe as wel as any wight,
How that your love al fully grauntid is
To Troilus, that is the worthiest wight
One of the world, and therto trowth iplight,
That but it were on him alonge ye n'olde
Him nevir falsin while ye livin sholde. 784

Now stonde it thus, that sith I fro you went
This Troilus, right platly for to seine,
Is through a guttir by a privy went
Into my chambre come in al this reine,
Unwist of every manir wight certaine
Save of my selfe, as wisely have I joie,
And by the faith I owe Priam of Troie: 791

And he is come in suche paine and distresse
That but he be all fully wode by this
He sodainly mote fall into wodenesse
But if God helpe: and the cause why is this,
He saith him told is of a frende of his
How that ye should love one that hight Horast,
For sorow of which this night shal be his last. 798

Creseidè, whiche that al this wondir herde,
Gan sodainly aboute her hert to colde,
And with a sigh she sorowfully answerd,
Alas! I wende whosoere talis tolde,
My dere hert, certis, eme, would me nat holde
So lightly faulfe: alas! conceitis wrong
What harme thei done! for now live I to long. 805

Horaste, alas! and falsin Troilus!
 I knowe him not, God helpe me so! (quod she.)
 Alas! what wickid spirite tolde him thus?
 Now certis, come, to morow' and I him se
 I shal therof as full excusin me
 As evir did woman, if that him like,
 And with that worde she gan fell fore to fike. 81

O God! (quod she) so worldly felinesse,
 Whiche clerkiȝ callen false felicite,
 Ymedlid is with many'a bittirnesse
 Ful anguissous, that is, God wote, (quod she)
 Condicion of weine prosperite,
 For eithir joy is comin nat ifere,
 Or ellis no wight hath 'hem alwaie here. 82

O brotil welde of mann'is joie unstable!
 With what wight so thou be, or how thou playe,
 Eithir he wote that thou joie art mutable,
 Or wote it nate, it mote ben one of twaie:
 Now if he wote it nat how maie he saie
 That he hath very joie and sinesse
 That is of ignoraunce aie in derkenesse? 83

Now if he wote that joy is transitory,
 (As every joie of worldly thing mote sie)
 Than every time he that hath in memory
 The drede of lesing makith him that he
 May in no parfite sikirnesse ybe,
 And if to lese his joie he set a mite
 Than semith it that joy is worth ful lite. 84

Bale III. TROILUS AND CRESSIDE.

Wherfore I wol define in this matere,
That truily for aught I can espie
There is no very wele in this world here;
But o thou wickid serpent Jelousie!
Thou misbelevid, envious folie,
Why hast thou Troilus made me to untrist,
That nevir yet agilte him that I wiste? 846

(Quod Pandarus) Thus fallin is this caas.
Why, uncle mine, (quod she) who tolde him this?
And why doth my dere hertè thus, alas!
Ye wote, ye, nece min, (quod he) what it is;
I hope al shal be wel that is amis,
For ye maie quenche al this if that you lest;
And doeth right so; I holde it for the best. 847

So shal I do to morow', iwis, (quod she)
And God toforne, so that it shal suffice.
'o morow, alas! that were faire (quod he.)
ay, nay, it maie nat stondin in this wise,
r, necè mine, thus writin clerkis wise,
at *Peril is with dretebing in ydrawe*;
y, suche abodis ben nat worthe an hawe. 848
lece, allè thing hath time, I dare avowe,
whan a chambre' a fire is or an hall,
more nede is it sodainly rescowe
to dispute and aske amongis all
is this candil in the strawe yfall?
medicite! for al among that fare
arwe is done, and farwel feldèfare. 849

And, neede mine, we take it nat agrefe
 If that ye fuffre' him al night in this wo;
 God helpe me fo ye had him nevir lefe;
 What dare I fain, now there is but watwo,
 But wel I wote that ye wol nat fo do,
 Ye ben to wife to don fo gret folie,
 To put his life al night in jeopardie.

Had I him nevir lefe? by God I wene
 Ye ne had nevir thing fo lefe, (quod she.)
 Now by my thrifte (quod he) that shall be fene;
 For fith ye make this enfample of me,
 If I al night would him in forowe fe
 For al the trefour in the toune of Froie,
 I bidde God that I nevir mote have joie.

Now loke than if ye that ben his love
 Should put his life all night in jeopardy
 For thing of nought: now by that God above
 Nat onely this delaie cometh of folie
 But of malice, if that I should nat lie:
 What! platly and ye fuffre' him in diftrefse
 Ye neithir bounte done ne gentilneffe.

(Quod þo Creseide) Wol ye done o thing,
 And ye therwith shal finte al his difefe,
 Have here and berith him this blewè ring;
 For there is nothing might him bettir plefe
 Save I my felfe, ne more his hart afe;
 And fith my derè heart is in his forowe
 Is galled offe, that fhall be to morowe.

A ringe ! (quod he) ye hafilwodis shaken !
 Ye, necè mine, that ring muſt have a ſtone,
 A ſtone which that might ded men alive maken,
 And ſuche a ring trowe I that ye have none :
 Diſcrecion out of your hed is gone,
 That fele I now, (quod he) and that is routhe :
 O time iloſt, wel maiſt thou curſin ſlouthe! 896

Wote ye not wel that noble' and hie corage
 Ne ſoroweth nat, ne ſtintith eke ſor lite,
 But if a ſole were in a jelous rage
 I n'olde ſettin at his ſorowe a mite,
 But feſte him with a fewè wordis white
 An othir daie, whan that I might him finde ;
 Bat this ching ſtant al in anothir kinde; 903

This is ſo gentle' and ſo tendir of herte
 That with his deth he wol his ſorowes wreke,
 or truſt it wel how fore ſo that him ſmerte
 e wol to you no jelous wordis ſpeke ;
 id forthy, nece, er that his hert to breke,
 ſpeke your ſelfe to him of this matere,
 with a worde ye maie his hertè ſtere. 910
 how have I tolde what peril he is in,
 his coming unwiſt to every wight,
 arde harme maie there be none ne ſin,
 my ſelf be with you al this night ;
 ow eke how it is your ownè knight,
 y that right ye muſt upon him triſte,
 al preſt to ſetche him when you liſte. 917

This accident so pitous was to here;
 And eke so like a sothe; at prime face,
 And Tróilus her knight, to her so there;
 His prive coming, and the sikir place;
 That though she thought she did him than a g
 Confidrid al thingis as thei stode;
 No wondir is, fens he did al for gode.

Creseide answerde, As wisely God at rest;
 My soule bring as me is for him wo,
 And, eme, iwis faine would I don the best,
 If that I a grace had for to do so;
 But whethir that ye dwel or for him go
 I am, til God me bettir mindē sende,
 At Dalcarnon, right at my witt's ende.

(Quod Pandarus) Ye, necē, wol ye here,
 Dalcarnon clepid is fleming of wretches;
 It semith hard, for wretthis wol nought lere;
 For very slouthē, or othir wilfull tēches,
 This said is by them that ben't worth two sets;
 But ye ben wise, and that ye han on hēde;
 N'is neithir harde ne skilful to withstonde.

Than, eme, (quod she) doeth her of as yow
 But er he come I wol up first arise;
 And for the love of God, fens al my trist
 Is on you two, and ye beth bothē wise,
 So werkith now, in so discrete a wise,
 That I honour maie have and he plesaunce,
 For I am here al in your govirnaunce.

That is wel said, (quod he) my necè dere!
There gode thrifte on that wiſe gentill herte;
But higgith ſtill, and takith him right here,
It nedith nat no ferthir for him ſterte;
And eche of you eſe othir ſorowes ſmert,
For love of God and Venus I the herie,
For ſone hope I that we ſhullin ben merie. 952

This Troilus full ſone¹on knees him ſette
Ful ſobrely right by her bedd²is hed,
And in his beſtè wiſe his lady grette;
But Lord! ſo ſhe woxe ſodainliche all red,
And thought anone how that ſhe ſhulde be dedde;
She couldè nat o worde aright out bringe,
So ſodainly for his ſodaine cominge. 959

But Pandarus, that ſo wel couldè ſele
n every thing, to plaie anon began,
nd ſayid, Nece, ſe how this lord gan knele,
ow for your trouthe ſe this gentil man;
id with that worde he for a quiſhin ran,
d ſaid, Knelith now whilis that thou leſte,
ere God your hertis bring ſonè to reſte. 966
an I naught ſain, for ſhe had him nat riſe,
rowe³ it put out of her remembraunce,
lis that ſhe toke it in the wiſe
ètie as for his obſervaunce;
ell finde I ſhe did him this pleaſaunce,
he him kiſt, although ſhe ſikid fore,
nd him ſit adoun withoutin more. 973

(Quod Pandarus) Now wol ye well begin, ::
 Now doth him sittin doune, gode neede decred ::
 Upon your bedd'is side, al there within, ::
 That eche of you the bet maie othir here; ::
 And with that worde he drew him to the fere,
 And toke a light, and found his countinaunce
 As for to loke upon an old romaunce.

Cresseida, that was Troilus lady right,
 And clere stode in a grounde of sikirnesse,
 All thought she that her servaunt and her knig
 Ne shulde of tronthe none unright of her gosse,
 Yet nathelesse, confidid his distresse,
 And that love is in cause of suche folie,
 Thus to him spake she of his jelousie :

Lo, hertè mine! as would the excellence
 Of love, aienst the whiche that no man maie,
 Ne ought eke godely makin resistance,
 And eke bicause I feltè wel and saie
 Your grete trowth and service evèry daie,
 And that your hert al mine was, soth to saine,
 This drove me for to rewe upon your paine ;

And your godenes have I founden' alway ye
 Of whiche my dèrs hert, and al my knight !
 I thanke it you, as ferre as I have wit,
 Al can I nat as much as it were right ;
 And I emforth my conning and my might
 Have, and aie shal, how fore so that me smert,
 Ben to you trewe and whole with all mine hert

And dredileffe that shal be founde at preve :
But, hertè mine ! what al this is to saine
Shal well be told, so that ye nought you greve,
Though I to you right on your self complaine,
For therewith mene I finally the paine
That halt your hert and mine in hevinesse
Fully to flaine, and every wrong redresse. 1008

My gode hert mine ! n'ot I for why ne how
That Jelousy, alas ! that wicked wivere,
Thus causèd is cropin into you,
The harme of whiche I would fain delivere :
Alas ! that he all whole or of him flivere
Should have his refute in so digne a place !
Than Jove him sone out of your herte erace ! 1015

But o thou Jove ! o auctour of nature !
Is this an honour to thy dignite
That folke ungilty sufferin here injure,
And who that gilty is al quite goeth he ?
O were it lesfull for to plaine of the,
That undeservid sufferist jelousie,
Of that I would upon the plaine and crie. 1022

Eke al my wo is this, that folke now usen
To saine right thus ; Ye, jelousie is love,
And would a bushil of venim excusen,
For that a grane of love is on it shove,
But that wote high Jove that sittin above
If it be liker love, or hate, or grame,
And aftir that it ought to bere his name. 1029

But certaine is some manir jelousie
 Is excusable more than some iwin,
 As whan cause is and some suche fantasie,
 With pite that so wel exprestid is
 That it unnethis doeth or saith amis;
 But godely drinkith up al his distresse,
 And that excuse I for the gentilnesse. 2036

And some so ful of fury is and dispite
 That it surmountith his preffion;
 But, hertè mine! ye be nat in that plite,
 That thonke I God, for whiche your passion
 I wol nat cal it but illusion
 Of haboundaunce of love and besy cure,
 That doth your hertè this disese endure; 2043

Of which I am right sory but nat wrothe,
 But for my devoir and your hert'is reffe.
 Where so you list, by ordal or by othe,
 By sorte, or in what wise so that you leste,
 For love of God let preve it for the beste,
 And if that I be gilty do me die;
 Alas! what might I more or done or scie? 2050

And tho with that a fewe bright teris newe
 Out of her eyin fel, and thus she seide;
 Now God, thou wost in thought ne dede untrew
 To Troilus was nevir yet Cresseide;
 With that her hed down in the bed she leide,
 And with the shete it wrie, and sighid fore,
 And held her pece; nat a word spake she more. 2057

But now helpe God to quench al this sorow,
So hope I that he shal, for he beste may,
For I have sene of a ful misty morow
Folowen ful oft a mery somir's day,
And Astir wintir foloweth grene May;
Men sene all day, and redin eke in stories,
That *Astir sharpe flouris ben victories.*

1064

This Troilus, when he her wordis herde,
Have ye no care him listè nat to slepe,
For it thought him no strokis of a yerde
To here or se Creseide his lady wepe,
But wel he felte about his hertè crepe,
For every tere whichè that Creseide asterolte,
The crampe of deth to straine him by the herte. 1071

And in his minde he gan the time accurse
That he came there, and that he was yborne,
For now is wicke ytournid into worse,
And all that labour he hath doen beforne
He wende it lost; he thought it n'as but lorne:
O Pandarus! thought he, alas! thy wile
Seruith of nought, so welawaie the while! 1078

And therewithall he hing adoune his hedde,
And fell on knees, and sorowfully sight:
What might he sain? he felt he n'as but dedde,
For wroth was she that shoud his sorowes light;
But nathèlesse whan that he spekin might
Than said he thus; God wote that of this game
Whan all is wist than am I nat to blame. 1085

Some after this, though true nobly were,
 When she sothe othis as her list devise
 Had of him takin, her thought the no fere
 Ne cause eke hope to bid him thence rise:
 Yet less thing than othis him suffice
 In many' a case; for every wight I gelle
 That lovith, well menith but gentilofte. 1148

But in effe she would ywete anon
 Of what man, and eke where, and also why,
 He jelous was, fens there was cause non;
 And eke the signe whiche that he toke it by,
 She bade him that to tell her busily,
 Or ellis certain she bare him on honde
 That this was doen of malice; her to fonde. 1155

Withoutin more, shortly for to sain;
 He must obeie unto his ladie's heft,
 And for the lasse harme he must somewhat fain;
 He saied her, When she was at soche a feft
 She might on him have lokid at the left;
 N'ot I nat what (all dere inough a rishe)
 As he that nedis must a cause out fishe. 1162

And she answerde, Swete hert! all were it so,
 What harme was that, since I non evill mene?
 For by that God that wrought us both two
 In all manir thing is mine entent clene;
 Soche argumentes ne be nat worthe a bene:
 Woll ye the childish jelous counterfete?
 Now were it worthy that ye were ibete. 117

The Troilus gan sorowfully like,
 Left she be wrothe him thought his hertè deide,
 And saied, Alas! upon my sorowe's like
 Have mercie, o swete hertè mine, Creseide!
 And if that in tho wordis that I seide
 Be any wrong, I woll no more trespase:
 Doeth what you list; I am all in your grace. 1175

And she answerde, Of gilt misericorde,
 That is to saine, that I foryeve all this,
 And evirmore on this night you recorde,
 And bethe well ware ye doe no more amis.
 Naie, dere hert mine: no more (quod he) iwis.
 And now (quod she) that I have you doe smerte
 Foryeve it to me, mine owne swetè herte! 1183

This Troilus with blisse of that suprised
 Put all in Godd'is hande, as he that ment
 Nothing but well, and sodainly avised
 He her in his armes fast to him hent;
 And Pandarus with a full gode entent
 Laied him to slepe, and saied, If ye be wise
 Sownith not now, lest morè folke arise. 1190

What might or maie the sely larkè saie
 Whan that the sparhauke hath him in his fote?
 I can no more but of these ilke twaie,
 (To whom this tale sugre be or sote)
 Though I tary a yere, somtime I mote
 After mine aucthour tellin ther gladnesse,
 As well as I have tolde ther hevynesse. 1197

Cressida, which she felt her thus; (kiss)
 (As which she felt in her bosom old)
 Right as an apple left she gave to make a
 When she him felt her in his arms fold;
 But Troilus all whole of curio's cold
 Can thankin the the blissful goddies
 Thus *Sundry points of light fall to be seen*

This Troilus in arms gan her handle,
 And sayid, Swete! as evir mote I gone
 Now be ye caught; now here is but we twaine;
 Now yeldich you, for othir bote is none;
 To that Cressida answerid thus anon;
 Ne had I at now, my swete heart dore!
 Ben yoldin, twis I were now not here.

O soth is said, that helid see to be
 Of a fevir or othir grete siknesse
 Men must drinkin, as we may oftin see,
 Full bittir drinke, and sot to have gladnesse
 Men drinkin oft in pain and in distress;
 I mene it here, as for this aviature,
 That through a pain hath foundin at his ture.

And now swetnesse yfemith fure more swete
 That bittirnesse assayid was before,
 For out of wo in blisse now thei set;
 Non soche thei feltin sithins thei were borne;
 Now is this bettir than bothe two be lorne;
 For love of God take every woman hede
 To werkin thus if it come to the nede.

Creseide all quite from every drede and tene,
 As she that iustle cause had him to trift,
 Made him soche fest it ioie was for to sene,
 Whan she his trowth and clene entent ywist;
 And as about a tre with many' a twill
 Bitrent and writhin is the swete wodbinde
 Gan eche of 'hem in armis othir winde. 1232

And as the newe abashid nightingale,
 That stintith first, whan she beginnith sing,
 Whan that she herith any herd'is tale,
 Or in the hedgis any wight stering,
 And astir sikir doeth her voice out ring,
 Right so Creseide, whan that her drede stent,
 Opened her hert, and told him her entent. 1239

And right as he that seeth his deth ishapen,
 And dyin mote, in aught that he maie gesse,
 And sodainly rescous doeth him escapen,
 And from his deth is brought in sikirnesse,
 For al this worlde in soche present gladnesse
 Was Troilus, and hath his lady swete:
 With no worse hap God let us nevir mete! 1246

Her armis smail, her back both streight and soft,
 Her sidis long, and fleshy, smothe, and white,
 He gan to stroke, and gode thrift bad full oft,
 Her snow-white throte, her brestis round and lite;
 Thus in this heven' he gan him to delite,
 And therewithall a thousande times her kist,
 That what to doen for ioie unneth he wist. 1253

Than saied he thus, O Love! a Charite!
 Thy mothir eke, Citherea the swete!
 Afir thy self next her yid be she,
 Venus I mene, the wellwilly planete,
 And next that Hymeneus! I the grete,
 For nevir man was to you goddis hold.
 As I, whiche ye have brought fro caris cold. 1260
 Benigne Love! thou holy bond of thinges,
 Who so woll grace, and list the not honoure,
 Lo! his desire woll fle withoutin winges,
 For n'oldist thou of bounte 'hem focoure,
 That servin best, and moste alwaie labour,
 Yet were all lost, that dare I well fain cerce, 1265
 But if thy grace ypassid our desertes.
 And for thou me, that lest thonike coud deserve
 Of them that nombrid ben unto thy grace,
 Hast holpin there I likely was to serve,
 And me bestowid in so high a place
 That thilke boundis maie no blisse surpasse,
 I can no more, but laude and reverence
 Be to thy bounte and thine excellence.
 And therewithall Creseide anon he list,
 Of whiche certain she ne felt no disese,
 And thus saied he, Now would to God I wist
 Mine herte swete! how I you best might pl
 What man (quod he) was evir thus as eke
 As I, on whiche the fairist and the best
 That er I seie deinith her hert to rest?

e maie ye sene that mercie passith right,
 experience of that is felt in me,
 at am unworthy to so swete a wight;
 But harte mine! of your benignite
 So thinkith, that though I unworthy be
 Yet mote I nede amendin in some wise
 Right through the vertue of your hie service. 1288

And for the love of God, my lady dere!
 Sith he hath wrought me for I shal you serve,
 As thus I mene, that ye woll be my fere
 To doe me live, if that you list, or sterue;
 So techith me how that I maie deserve
 Your thonke, so that I through min ignoraunce
 Ne doe nothing that you be displeaunce: 1295

For certis, freshe and womanlichè wife!
 This dare I saie, that trouth and diligence,
 That shall ye findin in me all my life,
 Ne I woll not certain breke your defence,
 And if I doe, present or in absence,
 For love of God let flea me with the dede,
 If that it like unto your womanhede. 1302

Iwis, (quod she) mine ownè hert'is lust!
 My ground of ese, and al mine hertè dere!
 Graunt mercie! for on that is all my trust:
 But let us fall awaie fro this mattere,
 For it suffisith this that said is here,
 And at o worde, withoutin repentaunce,
 Welcòme my knight, my pece, my suffisaunce! 1309

It delite or joies one of the best
 impossible to my wit to faie;
 I gith ye that have ben at the fest
 the gladnesse, if that him list to plaie;
 no more but thus, these ilke twaie
 at night, betwixin drede and shirnesse,
 that in love the gretist worthinesse.

1316

O blisfull night! of them so long sought,
 How blishe unto hem bothe two thou werel
 Why ne' had I soche fest with my soule ibought,
 Ye, or but the lest joie which that was there?
 Awaie thou soule daungir and thou fere!
 And let hem in this hevin blisse ydwell,
 That is so high that all ne can I tell.

But sothe is, though I can not tellin all,
 As can miþe ane þour of his excellence,
 Yet have I faied, and God toforne shall,
 In every thing all wholly his sentence,
 And if that I at Lov's reverence
 Have any worde in echid for the best
 Doeth therwithall right as your selvin le
 For all my wordis here, and every þ
 I speke hem all undir correction
 Of you that feling have in lov's art,
 And put it all in your discrecion,
 To encrese or make diminicion
 Of my langage, and that I you be
 But now to purpose of my rathir

Of ilke two, that ben in armis laft,
 Sothe to 'hem asondir gon it were,
 That eche from othir wendin ben biraft,
 Or ellis, lo! this was ther moste fere,
 That all this thing but nicè dremis were,
 For whiche full oft eche of 'hem saied, O swete!
 Clippe I you thus, or els doe I it mete? **1344**

And, Lorde! so he gan godelie on her se,
 That nevir his loke ne blent from her face,
 And saied, O my dere hertè! maie it be
 That it be sothe that ye ben in this place?
 Ye, hertè mine! God thanke I of his grace,
 (Quod tho Creseide) and therwithall him kist,
 That where here spirite was for joie she n'ist. **1351**

This Troilus full oft her eyin two
 Gan for to kisse, and saied, O eyin clere!
 It werin ye that wrought me sochè wo,
 Ye humble nettis of my lady dere,
 Though there be mercie writtin in your chere,
 God wote the text full harde is for to finde;
 How couldin ye withoutin bonde me binde? **1358**

Therwith he gan her fast in armis take,
 And well an hundrid timis gan he like,
 Not soche sorowfull sighis as men make
 For wo, or ellis whan that folke be like,
 But esie sighis, soche as ben to like,
 That shewid his affection within;
 Of soche manir sighis could he not blin. **1365**

Sone aftir this thei spake of sondrie thinges,
 As fill to purpose of this avinture,
 And playin enterchaungidie ther ringes,
 Of whiche I can not tellin no scripture,
 But well wot a broche of gold and asure,
 In whiche a rubie set was like an hert,
 Creseide him yave, and flacke it on his flierte.

Lorde! trowe ye that a covetous wretche
 That blamith love, and halte of it dispise,
 That of tho pens that he can mocke' and ketch
 Was evir yet yeve to him soche delite,
 As is in love in o point in some plite?
 Naie, doubtlesse, for all so God me save
 So parfite joie ne maie no nigard have.

Thei woll saie Yes, but Lorde that so thei lie!
 Tho busie wretchis full of wo and drede
 That callin love a wodnesse or folie;
 But it shall fall 'hem as I shall you rede,
 Thei shall forgon the white and eke the rede,
 And live in wo, there God yeve 'hem mischaunce
 And every lovir in his trouthe avaunce.

As would to God tho wretchis that dispise
 Service of love had cris all so long
 As had Midas, all full of covetise,
 And therto dronkin had as hotte and strong
 As Cyrus did for his affectis wrong,
 To techin 'hem that thei ben in the vice,
 And lovirs not, although thei hold 'hem nice.

These ilke two of whom that I you saie,
Whan that ther hertis well assurid were,
Tho gonnin thei to spekin and to plaie,
And eke rehercin how, and whan, and where,
Thei knewin first, and every wo or fere
That passid was; but all soche hevinesse,
Ithonkid God, was tournid to gladnesse. **I400**

And evirmore whan that 'hem fell to speke
Of any thing of soche a tunc agone
With kissing all that tale should ybreke,
And fallin into a newe joie anone,
And diddin all ther might, fens thei were one,
For to recoveren blisse and ben at ese,
And paifid wo, with joyis counterpaife. **I407**

Refon woll not that I spekin of slepe,
For it accordith not to my mattere;
God wote thei toke of it full litle kepe,
But lest this night that was to 'hem so dere
Ne should in vaine escape in no manere
It was bifet in joie and businesse
Of all that sounith into gentilnesse. **I414**

But whan the cocke, commune astrologer,
Gan on his brest to bete and astir crowe,
And Lucifer, the day's messanger,
Gan for to rise, and out his benis throwe,
And estward rose, to him that could it know,
Fortuna Major, than anone Creseide
With herte sore to Troilus thus seide: **I421**

Mine hert's life, my trust, al my plesance!
 That I was borne, alas! that me is wo,
 That daie of us mote make dilceverance,
 For time it is to rise and hennis go,
 Or ellis I am lost for ewirmo.
 O Night! alas! why n'ilt thou ore us hove
 As long as whan Alcmena laie by Jove. 1428

O blacke Night! as folke in bokis rede,
 That shapin art by God this worlde to hide
 At certain timis with thy derke wede,
 That undir that men might in rest abide,
 Wel oughtin bestes to plain and folke to chide,
 That thereas daie with labor would us brest,
 That thou us fliest and deinist us not rest. 1435

Thou doest, alas! so shortly thine office,
 Thou rale Night, that God makir of kinde
 The for thine hast, and thine unkindè vice
 So fast aie to our hemispherè binde,
 That nevirmore undir the ground thou winde,
 For through thy rale hying out of Troie
 Have I forgone thus hastily my joie. 1442

This Troilus, that with tho wordis felt,
 As thought him tho, for pittrous distresse
 The blodie teris from his hertè melt,
 As he that yet nevir soche heviness
 Assayid had out of so grete gladnesse,
 Can therewithall Creseide his lady dere
 In armis Rvain; and said in this manere? 1449

O cruill Daie! accuser of the joie
 hat Night and Love hath stole and fast iwrie,
 ccurfid be thy comming into Troie!
 or every bowre hath one of thy bright eyen:
 nvious Daie! what list the so to spien?
 hat hast thou lost? why sekist thou this place?
 here God thy light so quenchè for his grace! 1456
 Alas! what have these lovirs the agilt?
 ispitous Daie! thine be the paine of hell,
 or many' a lovir hast thou slain and wilt;
 thy poring in woll no where let 'hem dwell:
 What! prefrist thou thy light here for to sel?
 so, sell it them that finalè felis grave;
 Ve woll the not; us nedith no daie have. 1463

And eke the sonnè Titan gan he chide,
 And said, O fole! well maie men the dispise,
 hat hast all night the Dauning by thy side,
 And suffrist her so sone up fro the rise,
 or to difese us lovirs in this wise;
 What? hold your bed there thou and thy Morow;
 biddè God so yeve you both sorowe. 1470

Therwith full fore he sighed, and thus he seide:
 My lady bright, and of my welc or wo
 the well and rote! o godely mine, Creseide!
 And shall I rise, alas! and shall I goe?
 Now fele I that mine hertè mote a two;
 And how should I my life an hourè save
 ens that with you is all the life I have? 1477

What shall I doen? for certis I n'ot how,
 Ne whan, alas! I shall the time se
 That in this plite I stais ben eft with you,
 And of my life God wote how shall that be,
 Sens that desire right now so bitith me
 That I am dede anon but I retourne:
 How should I long, alas! fro you sojourne? 1484

But nathelless, mine owne ladie bright!
 Yet were it so that I wist uttirly
 That I your humble seruaunt and your knight
 Were in your herte ifet so fermly
 As ye in mine, the whiche thing truilly
 Me levir were than have these worldis twain,
 Yet should I bet endurin all my pain. 1491

To that Creseide answerid right anon,
 And with a sigh she saied, O herte dere!
 The game iwis so ferforth now is gon:
 That first shall Phœbus fallin from the sphere,
 And everiche egle ben the dov'is fere,
 And every rocke out of his place avertere,
 Er Troilus go out of Creseide's herte. 1498

Ye ben so depe within mine herte ygrave,
 That tho I would it turne out of my thought,
 As wisely very God my soule save,
 To dyin in the pain I couldè nought;
 And for the love of God, that us hath wrought,
 Let in your brain none othir fantasie
 So crepin, that it causè me to die. 1505

And that ye me would have as fast in minde
As I have you, that would I you beseeche,
And if I wist sothily that to finde,
God might not o point of my joyis eche.
But, hertè mine! withoutin morè speche,
Bethè to me true, or ellis were it routhe,
For I am thine, by God and by my trouthe. 1512

Bethe glad forthy, and live in sikirnesse,
Thus said I, ner er this, ne shall to mo;
And if to you it were a grete gladnesse
To tourne ayen sone aftir that ye go,
As faine would I as ye that it were so,
As wisely God mine hertè bring to reste,
And him in armis toke, and ostè kesse. 1519

Ayenst his will, sithe it mote nedis be,
This Troilus up rose, and fast him cled,
And in his armis toke his lady fre
An hundrid times, and on his waie him sped,
And with soche wordis as his herte ybled
He seidè, Farith wel, my dere herte swete!
That God us grauntè soun and sone to mete. 1526

To whiche no worde for sorowe she answerd,
so fore gan his parting her to distrain,
And Troilus unto his paleis ferd,
as wo bigon as she was, sothe to saine,
harde him wrong of sharpe desire the pain;
er to ben este there he was in plesaunce,
at it may nere out of his remembraunce. 1532

Retournid to his roiall paleis fons;
 He foft unto his bedde gan foe to fink;
 To fleepè long, as he was wont to fleep;
 But all for naught; he maide wel ligge and fink;
 But fleepe maie there none in his hertè fink;
 Thinking how ſhe, for whom he deſire him brende,
 A M. folde was worth more than he wende. 1340

And in his thought gan up and doone to wende
 Her wordis all, and every counſaunce,
 And fermly impreſſih in his minde
 The leſſe pointe that to him was pleaſaunce,
 And verily of thilke remembraunce
 Deſire al newe him brende, and luſt ad brende
 Gan more than erſt, and yet toke he non hede. 1347

Creſeide alſo right in the ſame wiſe
 Of Troilus gan in her hertè ſet,
 His worthineſſe, his luſt, his dedis wiſe,
 His gentilneſſe, and how ſhe with him met,
 Thonking Love that he ſo well her beſet,
 Deſiring oft to have her hertè dere
 In ſoche a place as ſhe durſt make him chere. 1350

Pandare a morowe which that commin was
 Unto his neede gan her faire to grete,
 And ſaied, All this night ſo rained it alas!
 That all my drede is that ye, neede ſwete!
 Have litle leiſur had to fleepe and mete;
 All night (quod he) hath rain ſo do me wake
 That ſome of us I trowe ther heddis ake.

And nere he came, and said, How stant it now,
This meric morowe? nece, how can ye fare?
Crescide answerde, Nevir the bet for you;
Foxe that ye ben, God yeve your herte care;
God helpe me so ye causid all this fare,
'Trowe I, (quod she) for all your wordis white:
Q who so seeth you knowith you full lite! 1568

With that she began her face for to wrie
With the shetè, and woxe for shame all redde,
And Pandarus gan undir for to pric,
And sayid, Nece, if that I shall ben dedde
Have here a swerde and smitith of my hedde:
With that his arme all sodainly he thrifte
Undir her necke, and at the last her kiste. 1575

I passe al that, which chargith naught to say:
What! God foryave his deth, and she also
Foryave; and with her uncle gan to plaie,
For othir cause ne was there none than so:
But of this thing right to th' effect to go,
Whan time ywas home to her house she went,
And Pandarus hath fully his entent. 1582

Now tournè we ayen to Troilus,
hat restèlesse full long a bedde ylaie,
nd privily sent astir Pandarus,
him to come in all the hast he maie:
come anon, not onis saied he naie,
i Troilus full sobirly he grete,
doun upon the bedd'is side him sete. 1589

This Troilus with all th' affections
 Of friendly love that hertè maie devise
 To Pandarus on kneis fill adorne,
 And er that he would of the place arise
 He gan him thankin on his belle wife,
 An hundrid time he gan the time bless
 That he was borne, to bring him fro distresse. 159

He said, O friend of frendes, I the shal know
 That evir was, the sothe for to tell,
 Thou hast in heven ibrought my soule at rest
 Fro Phlegethon, the fire flode of hell,
 That though I might a thousande times fel
 Upon a daie my life in thy service
 It ne might not a moté in that suffice. 166

The sonne, whiche that al the worldè maie se,
 Sawe never yet (my life that dare I leie)
 So joily, faire, and godely, as is she
 Whose I am all, and shall till that I dete;
 And that I thus am her's, dare I wel seie,
 That thankid be the highè worthinesse
 Of Love, and eke thy kindè businesse. 171

Thus hast thou me no little thing iyeve;
 For why? to the obligid be for aie
 My life; and why? for through thine helpe I live,
 Or els dedde had I ben many a daie:
 And with that worde down in his bed he laie,
 And Pandarus full sobirly him herde
 Till all was said, and than he him answerde: 176

My derè frènde! if I have doen for the
any case, God wote it is me lese,
d am as glad as man maie of it be,
d helpe me so; but take now not agrese
at I shall saine; beware of this mischese,
at there as now thou brought art to thy blisse
at thou thy self ne cause it not to misse: 1624

For of Fortun'is sharpe adversite
ie worstè kinde of infortune is this,
man to have ben in prosperite,
id it remembir whan it passid is:
iou' art wise inough, forthy doe nat amie;
not to rakill though thou sittè warne,
r if thou be certain it woll the harme. 1631

Thou art at ese, and hold the well therin,
r all so sure as redde is every fire
grete a craftie is to kepe well as twinne
idle alwaie thy spech and thy desire,
r Worldly joie holdeth not but by a wire,
at preveth well, it brest al daie so ofte,
r thy nede is to werkin with it softe. 1638

(Quod Troilus) I hope, and God toforme,
y derè frènde that I shall so me bere
at in my guilt tner shal nothing ben lorne,
I n'ill rake for to grevin her;
edith not this mattir ofte to tere,
r wiltiit thou mine hertè wel, Pandaré,
d wote of this thou wouldist litil care. 1645

Tho gan he toll him of his gladd siȝ
 And whereof first his hert ydradde out
 And sayid, Frende, as I am a true kniȝ
 And by that faiche I owe to God and
 I had it nevir halfe so hote as now,
 And oȝer the more that desire me bite
 To love her best the more it me delite

I n'ot my self not wisely what it is,
 But now I felin a newe qualite,
 Ye, all anoithir than I did er this.
 Pandare answerid and saied thus, that
 That ouȝt maie in hevin blisse yȝe
 He felith oȝer wayis, dare I laie,
 Than thilkē time he first hend of it sai

This is a wonde for al, that Troilus
 Was nevir ful to speke of this matere,
 And for to praisin unto Pandarus
 The bounte of his bright lady so dere,
 And Pandarus to thanke and makin c
 This tale was aie span newe to beginn
 Til that the night departid 'hem atwi

Sone after this, for that Fortune it
 Icomin was the blisful timē swete
 That Troilus was warnid that he shou
 There he was erst Cresseide his lady m
 For whiche he selte his herte in joie
 And faithfully gan all the goddis hery
 And let se now if that he can be mery

And holdin was the forme and al the gife
 Of her comming, and eke of his also,
 As it was erst, whiche nedith nought devise;
 But plainly to th' effectie right for to go,
 In joie and surete Pandarus' hem two
 A bedde ybrought whan that 'hem bothe lest,
 And thus thei ben in quiete and in rest. . . . 1686
 Naught nedith it to you, siþe thei ben met,
 To aske at me if that thei blithe ywere?
 For if it erst was well tho was it bet
 A thousande folde, this nedith not enquire;
 Ago was every sorow' and every fere,
 And bothe iwis thei had, and so thei wende,
 As moochil joie as herte maie comprehende. . . . 1687
 This n'is no lill thing of for to sey,
 This passith every wit for to devise,
 For eche of 'hem gan oþir's lust obey;
 Elicite, whiche that thes clerkis wise
 Commendin so, ne may not here suffice;
 His joye ne maie not writrin be with inke;
 It passith al that any hert maie thinke. . . . 1694
 But cruil day, so welaway the stounde!
 For to' approche, as thei by signis knewe,
 Whiche 'hem thought thei felin deeth'is wounde:
 So was 'hem that chaungin gan thier hewe,
 Day thei gon in to dispile al newe,
 As it traitour, envious, and worse,
 Ittirly the day' is light thei corse. . . . 1701

(Quod Troilus) Alas! now am I want
 That Pyrois, and the swifte Rodis there
 Whiche that ydrawin forth the Sun in pithare
 Han gon some bypathe in dispite of me,
 And makith it so sone dny to be,
 And for the Sunne him hastith thus to rise
 Ne shal I nevir don him sacrifice. 170

But medis daie departin' hem must sone;
 And whan thier speche don was and then chere
 Thei twin anon, as thei were wth to do so,
 And settin' time of meting este ifere,
 And many' a night thei wrought in this manere:
 And thus Fortune a time yladde in joie
 Cresside and eke this king is son of Troie. 171

In suffisaunce, in blisse, and in singinges,
 This Troilus gan al his life to lye;
 He spendith, justith, and makith festinges;
 He gevith frely ofte, and chaungich weds;
 He helde about him alwaie out of drede
 A world of folke, as come him well of kinde,
 The freshest and the best that he could finde. 172

That suche a voice was of him and a steven
 Throughout the world of honour and largesse
 That it up ronge unto the yate of heven;
 And as in love he was in suche gladnesse
 That in his hert he demid as I gesse
 That there n'is lovur in this world at ese
 So wel as he, and thus gan love him plesse. 173

The godelihede or beaute whiche that Kinde
In any othir lady had ifette
Can not the mountenaunce of a gnat unbinde
About his hert of al Creseid'is nette;
He was so narowe' imaskid and iknette
That is undon in any manir side
That n'il nat ben for aught that maie betide. 1736

And by the honde ful oftin he would take
This Pandarus, and into gardin lede,
And fuche a fest and fuche a proceffe make
Him of Creseide, and of her womanhede,
And of her beaute, that withoutin drede
It was an heven his wordis for to here,
And than he wouldè sing in this manere: 1743

Love, that of erthe and se hath govirnaunce,
Love, that his heftis hath in hevin hie,
Love, that with a right wholsome aliaunce
Halte peple joynid as him liste 'hem gie,
Love, that yknitteith lawe and companie,
And couplis doth in vertue for to dwel,
Binde this accorde that I have tolde and tel. 1750

That that the world with faith, whiche that is fable,
Diversith so his floundis according,
That elementis that bethe discordable
Holdin a bonde perpetually during,
That Phœbus mote his rosy day forth bring,
And that the mone hath lordship ore the nightes,
Al this doeth Love; aie heried be his mightes! 1757

That that the se, that greedy isco lovich,
 Constrainith to a certaine end; for
 His floodis, that so fierfly thei ne grown
 To drenchin erthe and all for evrime;
 And if that Love aught let his bridil go,
 Al that now lovith afeutir shoud lope;
 And lost were al that Love' hak now to hepe: 1764

So would to God, that suchour is of kinde,
 That with his bonde love of his vertue kinde
 To serchia hertis al; and fast to binde;
 That from his bonde no wight the wyb. but wyl;
 And hertis colde them wold; that he twis
 To make 'hem love, and that list him aie rewe
 On hertis fore, and loope 'hens that ben trewe: 1773

In alle nedis for the toun'is veyre
 He was, and aie the first in armis dight,
 And certainly, but if that bekis ere,
 Save Hector most idradde of any wight;
 And this encrese of hardinesse and might
 Come him of love, his ladies thanks to win;
 That altid his spirite so within. 1778

In time of truce on hauking would he ride,
 Or ellis hunt the bore, beare, or lion;
 The smale bestis let he gon beside;
 And whan that he come riding into' the toun
 Ful oft his lady from her window down,
 As fresh as faucon comin out of mwe,
 Ful redy was him godely to salve. 1785

And most of love and vertue was his speche,
And in dispite had he al wretchidnesse;
And doutlesse no nede was him to beseeche
To honourin them that had worthinesse,
And esin hem that werin in distresse;
And glad was he if any wight wel ferde
That lovir was whan he it wist or herde. 1792

For, sothe to saine, he lost helde every wight
But if he were in Lov'is high service,
I menè folke that aught it ben of right;
And ore al this so wel coulde he devise
Of sentiment, and in so uncouthe wise
Al his array, that every lovir thought
That al was well what so he said or wrought. 1799

And though that he be come of blode royal
Him list of pride at no wight for to chace;
Benigne he was to eche in general,
For which he gate him thanke in every place:
Thus wouldè Love, ihieried be his grace!
That pride and ire, envie and avarice,
He gan to fle, and every othir vice. 1806

Thou lady bright, the doughtir of Dione!
Thy blinde and wingid sonne eke, Dan Cupide!
Ye Sustrin Nine eke! that by Helicone
In hil Parnasso listin for to abide,
That ye thus ferre han deinid me to gide
I can no more, but sens that ye wol wende
Ye heried ben for aie withoutin ende! 1813

Through you have I told folly in my tale;
 Th' effects and joies of Troilus service;
 Al be that there was some diffe' among,
 As mine auctor to histh'ce devise:
 My Thirde Boke now ends: I in this will,
 And Troilus his iulke and iun' quene
 Is with Cressida, his owne ladie seene. 1816

Explicit liber tertius.

PROCEMIUM LIBRI QUARTI.

But all to kill, welaway the while!
 Lastith suche joie; kheskid be fortune;
 That semith twisid what she wol begile;
 And can to folis so her souge costume
 That she hem hent and blowt, traicteur continue,
 And whan a wight is from her whele throwe
 Than laughith she; and makith him the mowe; 7

From Troilus she gan her brighte face
 Away to writhe, and toke of him non hede;
 And caste him elene out of his ladie's grace,
 And on her whele she set up Diomedes,
 For which min hert right now ginnith to blede;
 And now my pen, alas! with which I write;
 Quakith for drede of that I must endite: 14

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA

For how Cresseidè Troilus forsoke,
 at the last how that she was unkinde,
 the hennisforthe ben matir of my Boke;
 writin folke through which it is in minde:
 is! that thei should evir cause finde
 speke her harme! and if thei on her lie
 thei selfe should have the vilanie. 1
 O ye Erinnyes! Night's doughtirs thre,
 at endeleffe complaine evir in paine,
 gæra, Alecto, and Typhphone,
 ou cruil Marscke! fathir of Quirine,
 is ilke Fourth Boke helpith me for to fine,
 that the loos of love and life isere
 Troilus be fully shewid here. 28

INCIPIIT LIBER QUARTUS.

GOING in host, as I have saide er this,
 Grekis strong aboutin Troiè tounne,
 that whan that Phœbus shining is
 the breste of Hercules Lioun
 Hector with many a bold borow
 a dale with Grekis for to fight,
 as wont, to greve 'hem what he might. 35
 How long or short it was bitwene
 pose and that day thei fightin mente;
 daie wel armid bright and shene
 and many' a worthy knight out wente
 in honde, and with bigge howis bente,
 berde, withoutin lengir lette,
 in the felde anon 'hem mette. 42

The longe day with speis sharpe groundes, to
 With arrowes, dartis; fwerdes, and much fel,
 Thei fight, and bringis horse and man to grounde,
 And with their armis cut the brainis quod,
 But in the last shoure, the sothe for to tel,
 The folke of Troie hem selvin so mistiden
 That with the worfe at night homeward thei fleden.

At which day was taken Antenor,
 Polydamas, and also Menestes,
 Xantippe, Sarpedon; Polyfionor,
 Polixen, or the Troian, Dan Ruphes,
 And othir litte folk, as Phebusas,
 So that for harme that daie the folke of Troie
 Dredin to lese a grete partie of ther jole.

Of Priamus was yeve, at Grekes request,
 A time of tiece, and tho thei gonnir tiece
 Ther prisoner to chaungin most and lest,
 And for the surplus yevin sommis grece;
 This thing auqn was conthe in every strote,
 Bothe in th' assege; in toun, and every where,
 And with the first it came to Calchasere.

When Calchas knew this tiece should yholde,
 In confitorie amonge the Grekis sone
 He gan in thringe forth with the lordis olde,
 And set him there as he was wont to done,
 And with a chaungid face hem bade a bone,
 For love of God, to done that reverence
 To stintin noife, and yeve him audience.

Than said he thus, Lo! Lordis mine, I was
 Troyan, as it is knowin out of drede,
 And if that you remembre I am Calchas,
 That aldirfirst gave comfort to your nede,
 And toldè wel howe that you shoudin spede,
 For dredelesse through you that in a stounde
 Ben Troie shent, and hetin down to grounde. **77**

And in what forme or in what manir wile
 This toun to shende, and al your lust atcheve,
 Ye have er this wel herde me you devise;
 This knowin ye, my Lordis, as I leve,
 And for the Grekis warin me so leve,
 I came my fesse in my propir persone
 To techè in this how you was best to done. **84**

Having unto my tresour ne my rent
 Right no regarde in respecte of your ese,
 Thus al my gode I leste and to you went,
 Wening in this you, Lordis, for to plesse;
 But al that losse ne doth me no disese;
 I vouchsafè do, as wisely have I joie,
 For you to lese al that I have in Troie, **91**

Save of a doughtir that I leste, alas!
 Sleping at home when out of Troie I stert:
 O sterne, o cruil, fathir that I was!
 Howe might I have in that so hard an bert?
 Alas that I ne' had brought her in my shert!
 For sorow' of which I wol nat live to morow
 But if ye, Lordis, rewe upon my sorow. **98**

108.

Bol: 1P.

et now
pers,
you,
dowlets
is pres
reffe,
s he vineffe. 105
trid in prifon
illis be
e redemption;
of bouste
tim me
ir for to werne,
and town as yern? 112
nat lie,
ithfully;
onomy,
y, trewely,
e is false by
all the town shal fprede,
ne to affin dede. 119
and Neptunus bothe,
s of the town,
ruie alwaie fo wroth
to confufion;
g Laomedon,
n 'hem ther hire,
i ben fet on fire. 126

the King
ereupon hi
che th'eff
bessadour
fchaunge
likith wel, an
his Troilus was
an affkid was for
rtliche ful forie
that with the
ntioleffe he n
reen should hi
mann" is hert

Telling his tale alway this oldè grey,
 Humble in speche and in his loking eke,
 The saltè teris from his eyin twey
 Ful fast yronnin down by eithir cheke;
 So long he gan of socour 'hem beseke
 That for to hele him of his sorowes fore
 Thei gave him Antenor withoutin more. 133

But who was glad inough but Calchas tho?
 And of this thing ful sone his nedis leide
 On them that shouldin for the tretise go,
 And them for Antenor ful oftè preide
 To bringin home King Thoas and Creseide;
 And whau Priam his safe conduct sent,
 Th' embassadours to Troie streight thei went. 140

The cause i-tolde of ther comming; the olde
 Priam the King ful sone in generall
 Can hereupon his parliment to holde,
 Of whiche th' effecte rehertin you I shall:
 Th' embassadours ben answerde for finall
 The eschaunge of prisoners and al this nede
 Them likith wel, and forth in thei procede. 147
 This Troilus was present in the place
 Can askid was for Antenor Creseide,
 Whiche ful sone to chaungin gan his face,
 He that with tho wordis wel nigh deide;
 Nathelesse he no worde to it seide,
 Men should his affection espie;
 Mann'is hert he gan his sorowes drie. 154

And ful of anguish and of greet desire
 Abode what their lordes would do to it; for
 And if that thei would graunte it to her;
 Th' eichange of her; then thought he thing is way;
 First how to save her honour; and what way
 He mighte best th' eichange of her with honde;
 Ful fast he cast how with this mighte honde;
 Love him made all prest to do as he wold;
 And rather dyin than that she shold go;
 But Reason said him on that his side
 Withoutin assent of her do not so;
 Lest for thy werke she wold be thy foe;
 And said, that though thy medling is blowe;
 Your both love that is was erst not knowe;
 For which he gan deliber for the best;
 And though the lordes would do what he wold;
 He wold suffer them graunt what he wold;
 And tel his lady first what that thei ment;
 And when that she had said him her entent;
 Therafter wold he werke all so blive
 Tho al the world gyven it wold yfrike;
 Hector with that full wel the Grekis herd
 For Antenor how they wold have Creseide;
 Can it with honde; and fairly answerde;
 Sirs, she is no prisoner (he seide);
 I n'ot on you who that this charge bide;
 But on my parte ye maie eichone hem to
 We usin here no women for to sell.

The noise of people upstert then atones
As brimme as blase of strawe iset on fire,
For infortune it wouldè for the nones
Thei shoudin ther confusion desire.

Hector, (quod thei) what gost may you enspire
This woman thus to shilde, and done us lese
Dan Antenor? a wrong waie now ye chese 189

That is so wise, and eke so bolde baroun,
And we have nede of folke, as men may se;
He is one of the gretist of this toun:
O Hector! lette suche thy fantasies be;
O King Priam! (quod thei) thus seggè we,
That all our voice is to forgone Creseide,
And to delivir Antenor thei preide. 196

O Juvenal, Lorde! trewe is thy sentence,
That litil wenin folke what is to yerne,
That thei ne findin' in ther desire offence,
For cloude of erroure ne lette 'hem discernie
What best is; and lo! here ensample' as yerne;
These folke desirin now deliviraunce
Of Antenor, that brought 'hem to mischaunce: 203

For he was astir traitour to the toun
Of Troy, alas! thei quitte him out to rathe:
O nice world, lo thy discrecion!
Creseidè, which that never did 'hem scathe,
Shal nowe no lengir in her blisse bathe,
But Antenor he shal come home to toun,
And she shal out; thus said both heere and houn. 210

TROILUS AND CRESEIDE

Bill. 17.

ich delibered was by parliament
 nor to yeldin out Creseide,
 pronounced by the President;
 h that Hector may ful oftè praide;
 ally, what wight that it withsaide
 or naught; it must yhen and shoald;
 stance of the parliament it would.
 artid out o' th' parliament echone,
 Troilus, withoutin wordisme,
 his chambre spedde him fast alone,
 it were a man of his or two,
 whiche he had outfastè for to go,
 ife that he would slepin, as he saide,
 hastily upon his bedde him laide.
 nd as in wintir levis ben birafte
 e after othir til the trees be bare,
 hat there n'is but barke and braunche ilaste
 he Troilus birafte of eche welfare,
 undin in the blackè barke of care;
 sposid wode out of his witte to breide,
 fore him fate the chaunging of Creseide.
 He rist him up and every dore he shette
 nd window. eke, and tho this wofull man
 pon his bedd'is side adoune him sette,
 ul like a ded image, both pale and wan,
 And in his brest the hepid wo began
 Out brust, and he to workin in this wise.
 In his wodenesse, as I shal you devise.

217

2

Right as the wildè bulle beginnith spring
Now here now there, idartid to the herte,
And of his deth rorith in complaining,
Right so gan he about the chambre sterre,
Smiting his brest aie with his fistis smerte;
His hed to the' wall, his body to the grounde,
Ful ofte he swapte, him selvin to confounde: 245

His eyin two for pite of his herte
Out stremidin as swifte as wellis twey;
The highè sebbis of his sorowes smerte
His speche him reſte; unnethis might he ſey
O Deth, alas! why n'ilt thou do me dey?
Acurſid be that day which that Nature
Yſhope me to ben a liu'is cature! 252

But aftir, whan the fury' and al the rage
Whiche that his herte twiſt and faſtè threſt
By length of timè ſomewhat gan aſwage,
Upon his bedde he laide him down to reſt;
But tho begon his teres more out to breaſt,
That wondir is the body maie ſuffiſe
To haſte this wo whiche that I you deuiſe: 259

Than ſaide he thus; Fortune, alas the while!
What haue I done? what haue I the agilt?
How mightiſt thou for routhe thus me begile?
Is there no grace? and ſhal I thus be ſpilt?
Shal thus Creſeide away for that thou wilt?
Alas! how mightiſt thou in thine hert finde
To ben to me thus cruil and unkinde? 266

Have I the nat honour'd at my live,
 As thou well wotest, above the goddis all?
 Why wilt thou then of this joyd me deprive?
 O Troilus! what may men now the call
 But wretche of wretchis, out of honourfal
 Into mis'ry? in which I wel bewaile
 Creseide, alas! til that the brethe me faile!

273

Alas, Fortune! if that my life in joy
 Displeid had unto thy soule envie,
 Why ne' haddist thou my fathir King of Try
 Birafted the life, or done my beethrin die,
 Or slaine my selfe, that thus complaine and crie?
 I combre world that maie of nothing serve,
 But evir die and nevir fully serve.

280

If that Creseide alone werin me: laste
 Naught raught I whidir thou woldist me sterc,
 And her, alas! than hast thou me birafted:
 But evirmore, lo! this is thy manere,
 To reve a wight that moſte is to him dere,
 To preve in that thy gierfull violence;
 Thus am I lost, there helpith no defence.

287

O very Lorde! o Love, o god! alas!
 That knowist best min hert and al my thought,
 What that my soroufull life done in this case
 If I forgo that I so dere have brought?
 Sens ye Creseide and me have fully brought
 Into your grace, and both our hertis seled,
 How maie ye suffre', alas! it be repeled?

294

What I may done I shal, while I may dure
 On live, in torment and in cruill paine;
 This infortune and this disavinture
 Alone as I was borne I wol complaine;
 Ne nevyr wol I sene it shine or raine,
 But ende I wel as Edippe in derknesse:
 My wofull life, and dyin in distresse.

301

O wery gost! that errist to and fro;
 Why n'ilt thou flien out of the wofullest
 Body that evyr might on grounde ygo?
 O soule! lurking in this woful neste,
 Flee forth anon, and do mine herte to breste;
 And folowe Creseide thy lady dere;
 Thy right place is no lengir to ben here.

308

O woful eyin two! sens your disparte
 Was al to sene Creseid's eyin bright;
 What shal ye done; but for my discomforte
 Stondin for naught and wepin out your sight,
 Sens she is queint that wont was you to light?
 In veine from this forth have I eyin twey
 Iformid, sens your vertue is away.

315

O my Creseide! o lady soveraine!
 Of this sorowfull soule that thus crieth
 Who shal now yevin comfort to thy paine?
 Alas! no wight; but whan mine hert ydieth
 My spirite, whiche that so unto you bieth,
 Receve in gre, for that shall aie you serve;
 Forthy no force is though the body sterve.

322

O ye ladies! that high uped there be
 Ben sette of Fortune, in gods aventure
 God lene that ye nie finda love of fre,
 And longè mote your life in joy endure;
 But when ye comis by my sepulture!
 Remembrith that your fellows resteth there,
 For I loved eke, though I unworthy were. 315

O olde unwholsome and mislivid man,
 Calchas I mene! alas! what cild the
 To ben a Greke sene thou art borne Trojan?
 O Calchas! whiche that wok my hand be,
 In cursid tyme was thou borne for me;
 As woulde blisfull Jove for his joye
 That I the had: where that I would in Troie! 326

A thousande sighis hottir than the gléde
 Out of his brest eche aftir othir wente,
 Medlid with plaintis newe, his wo to fede,
 For whiche his woful teris nevir stente;
 And, shortly, so his sorowes him to rente,
 He woxe so mate that ne joy nor penaunce
 He felith none, but lyith in a trauunce. 334

Pandarus, whiche that in the parlyment
 Had herde what every lord and burgeis seid,
 And how ful grauntid was by one assent
 For Antenor to yeldin out Cresside,
 Gan wel nigh wode out of his wit to breide,
 So that for wo he ne wist what he mente,
 But in a rage to Troilus he wente.

A certaine knight that for the timè kepte
 The chambre dore undid it him anon,
 And Pandarus, that ful tendirly wepte,
 Into the derke chambre as still as stone
 Towarde the bedde gan softly for to gone,
 So confuse that he ne wist what to say;
 For very wo his witte was nigh away. 357

And with his chere and loking al to torne
 For wo of this, and with his armis folden,
 He stode this woful Troilus beforne,
 And on his pitous face he gan beholden;
 But Lord! so oft he gan his hert to colden,
 Seyng his frende in wo, whose hevynesse
 His hertè slough, as thought him, for distresse. 364

This woful wight, this Troilus, that feltè
 His frende Pandare icomin him to se,
 Gan as the snow ayenst the sunne to melte,
 For whiche this woful Pandare of pite
 Gan for to wepe as tendirly as he;
 And spechèlesse thus ben these ilkè twey,
 That neithir might for sorow o worde sey. 371

But at the last this wofull Troilus,
 Nigh ded for smert, gan breslin out to rore,
 And with a sorowful noise he said thus
 Amonges his fabbis and his sighis fore;
 o! Pandare, I am ded, withoutin more;
 all thou nat herde at parliment, he seide,
 v Antenor how losse is my Creseide? 378

AND CRETEIDE.

Eccl: IV.

ed and pale of hewe,
and saide Yes,
as it is tiewe
d wate al how it is!
would have trowid this?
ade that in so like a throw
uld havin ovrthrow? 385
ld there is no cecture,
it evir sawe ruine
through cafe or swinture;
hase or al devine?

Forthy I thus define,
ht to finde in Fortune 391
yctis ben commune.
why thou art now so mad,
why listt thou in this wile,
wholly hast thou had,
tought inough suffice?
felte in my service
or loking of an eye,
pe and wailin til t dye.
is, as thou wel wost thy selve,
lof ladies al aboute,
ie fairir than suchè twelve
ball I finde in a route,
y, withoutin any doote:
le, mine ownè dèrè brother I
re shal recovre an othet.

What ! God forbid alway that eche plesaunce
In o thing were, and in non othir wight ;
If one can singe anothir can wel daunce,
If this be godely she is glad and light,
And this is faire and that can gode aright ;
Eche for his vertue holdin is full dere
Bothe heroner and faucon for riuere.

413

And eke, as writ Zanis, that was full wise,
The newè love out chasith oft the old,
And upon newe case lyith newe awife ;
Thinke eke thy self to fain thou art hold ;
Soche fire by proceffe shall of kindè cold,
For sens it is but casuell plesaunce
Some case shal put it out of remembraunce.

410

For all so sure as daie cometh astir night
The newè love, labour, or othir wo,
Or ellis seldè seing of a wight,
Doen old affections all ovir go ;
And for thy part thou shalt have one of tho
To abredgè with thy bittir painis smerte ;
Absence of her shall drive her out of herte.

417

These wordis saied he for the nonis all
To helpe his frende, lest he for sorowe deide,
And doubtlesse to doen his wo to fall
He saught nat what unthrift that he seide ;
Troilus, that nigh for sorowe deide,
A little hede of all that ere he ment ;
Ere it herd, at the' othir out it went.

434

But at the last he answers, and said, Friend,
 This lechcraft, or yhelid thus to be,
 Were well fitting if that I were a fend,
 To traifin her that true is unto me;
 I praie God let this counsaile never the,
 But doe me rathir sterve anon right here,
 Er I thus doen as thou me wouldist lere.

She that I serve iwis, what so thou seie,
 To whom mine herte enhabito is by right,
 Shall have me wholly her's till that I deie;
 For, Pandarus, sens I have trouth her hight
 I woll nat ben untrue for any wight,
 But as her man I woll aie live and sterve,
 And never wolle non othir creture serve.

And there thou spiest thou shalt as faire yfind
 As she, let be; make no comparison
 To a creture iformid here by Kinde;
 O leve, Pandarus! thy conclusion;
 I woll nat ben of thine opinion
 'Touching all this, for whiche I the besêche
 Soholde thy pece; thou slaest me with thy speche.

Thou biddist me that I should love another
 All freshly newe, and let Creseidè go;
 It lithe nat in my powir, levè brother,
 And though I might yet would I nat doe so;
 But canst thou playin raket to and fro,
 Nettle' in Docke out, now this now that, Pandare
 Now fould fall her for thy wo that care!

Thou farist eke by me, thou Pandarus,
As he that whan a wight is wo bigon
He cometh to him apace and saith right thus,
Thinke not on smert and thou shalt felè none.
Thou maiest me first transmewin in a stone,
'And reve me of my passionis all,
Or thou so lightly do thy wo to fall. 469

The deth maie well out of my brest depart
The life, so long maie last this sorowe mine,
But fro my soulè shall Creseid's dart
Out nevirmore, but doune with Proserpine,
Whan I am dedde, I woll go won in pine,
And there I woll eternally complain
My wo, and how that twinnid be we twain. 476

Thou hast here made an argument full fine,
How that it shouldin lassè pain ybe
Creseidè to forgon, for she was mine,
And lived in ese and in felicite :
Why gabbist thou, that saidist erst to me
That him is wors that is fro wele ithrowe
Than he had erst none of that wele iknowe? 483

But tel me now, sens that the thinketh so light
To chaungin so in love aie to and fro,
Why hast thou nat doen busily thy might
To chaungin her that doeth the al thy wo?
Why n'ilt thou let her fro thine hertè go?
Why n'ilt thou love anothir lady swete,
That maie thine hertè settin in quiete? 490

2

This Troilus in teris gan distill,
 As licour out of a limbeck full fast,
 And Pandarus gan hold his tongè still,
 And to the ground his eyin dounè he cast,
 But nathèlesse thus thought he at the last;
 What! parde rathir than my felowe deie

477

Yet shall I somewhat more unto him soie. 525

And sayid, Frend, sens thou hast soche distresse,
 And sens the list mine argumentis blame,
 Why n'ilt thou thy selvin helpe doen redresse,
 And with thy manhode lettin all this game?
 Go ravishe her, ne canst thou not for shame?
 And eithir let her out of tounè fare
 Or hold her still, and leve thy nicè fare. 532

Art thou in Troie and hast non hardiment
 To take a woman whiche that lovith the,
 And would her selvin ben of thine assent?
 Now is not this a shame?

First, sin thou wast this count both at this weere
 For ravishing of women so by might,
 It should not ben y^eassed she to erre,
 As it stont shew, she deap for gods unright;
 I should have also blame of every wight;
 My fathir's grutust if that I for withhoda;
 Some she is chaungid for she tope be gode.

353

I have eke thought, for it were her affont,
 To aske her of my fathir of his grace,
 'Than thinke I this were her adfacement,
 Sens well I wot I natie her not purchase;
 For sene my fathir in so high a place
 As parliment hath her echaunge endled
 He n'ill for me his lettir be repeled.

356

Yet drede I moeste her herte to perturbe
 With violence; if I doe soche a game,
 For if I would it opiny disturbe
 It must be disclaundre unto her pame,
 And me were levir die than her diffame;
 As n'oldè God; but if that I should have
 Her honour levir than my life to save.

Thus am I lost, for aught that I can se,
 For certain is that sith I am her knight
 I must her honour levir have than me!
 In every case, as lovir ought of right;
 Thus am I with desire and resbn twight,
 Desire for to dishonourin her me redeth,
 And resbn n'ill not, so mine herte dredeth.

Thus weping, that he ne could nevir cese,
 He saied, Alas! how shall I wretchè fare?
 For well sele I alwaie my love encrese,
 And hope is lasse and lasse alway, Pandare;
 Encrefin eke the causis of my care;
 So welawaie! why n'ill mine hertè brest?
 For why? in love there is but little rest. 584

Pandare answerid, Frend, thou maicst for me
 Doen as the list, but had I it so hote,
 And thine estate, she should ygo with me;
 Tho all this toun cried on this thing by note,
 I n'oldè set all that noise at a grote,
 For whan men have well cried than woll thei roun,
 Eke wondir last but ix daies nere in toun. 588

Devinith not in reson aie so depe,
 Ne curtisly, but helpe thy self anon;
 Bet is that othirthan thy selvin wepe,
 And namily sens ye two ben all one:
 Rise up, for by mine hedde she shall not gone,
 And rathir ben in blame a little found
 Than sterve here as a gnat withoutin wound. 595

It is no shame unto you ne no vice
 Her to withholdin that the lovith moste;
 Paravinture she might holde the for nice
 To lette her go thus to the Grekis hoste:
 Thinke eke *Fortune*, as well thy selvin woste,
Helpith the bardie man to his emprise,
 And weivith wretchis for ther cowardise. 602

And though thy lady would alite her grave,
 Thou shalt thy self thy pece hereafter make;
 But as to me certain I can not leue
 That she would it as now for euill take,
 Why shouldè than for fere thine hertè quake?
 Thinke how that Paris hath, that is thy brother,
 A love, and why shal thou not have another? 609

And, Troilus, a thing I dare the sweare,
 That if Creseidè, whiche that is thy lefe,
 Now lovith the as well as thou doest here,
 God helpe me so, she n'ill dot take agrefe
 Though thou do boete anon in this mischefe;
 And if she wilnith fro the for to passe
 Than is she false, so love her well the false. 616

Forthy take hert, and thinke right as a knight,
 Through love is brokin al daie every lawe;
 Kith now somewhat thy corage and thy might;
 Have mercie on thy self; for any awe
 Let not this wretchid wo thine hert ygnawe,
 But manly set the worlde on fixe and seven,
 And if thou die, a martyr go to heven. 623

I woll my self ben with the at this dede,
 Though I and all my kin upon a stound
 Should in a fete as doggis liggin dede;
 Through-girt with many a wide blode wound;
 In every case I woll a frend be found;
 And if the liste here steruin as a wretche
 Adieu, the de-vill spedè him that retche! 630

This Troilus gan with tho wordis quicke,
 And sayid, Frend, graunt mercie! I assent,
 But certainly thou maicst nat so me pricke,
 Ne paine none ne maie me so tourment,
 That for no case, it is not mine entent,
 At short wordis, though that I dyin should,
 To ravish her but if her self it would. 637

Why, so mene I (quod Pandare) al this day;
 But tell me than, hast thou her well assaied
 That sorowest thus? and he answerde him Naie.
 Whereof art thou (quod Pandare) than dismaied,
 That n'oste not that she wol ben il apaied
 To ravish her, sens thou hast not ben there,
 But if that Jove the tolde it in thine ere? 644

Forthy rise up, as naught ne were, anon,
 And washe thy face, and to the king thou wend,
 Or he maie wondrin whidir thou art gon;
 Thou must with wisdome him and othir blend,
 Or upon case he maie aftir the fend
 Or thou be ware: and, shortly, brothir dere!
 Be glad, and let me werke in this matter; 651

For I shall shape it so that sikirly
 Thou shalt this night somtime in some manere
 Come spekin with thy ladie privily,
 And by her wordis, eke as by her chere,
 Thou shalt full sone aperceve and well here
 Of her entent, and in this case the best;
 And fare now well, for in this point I rest. 658

The swiftè Fame; whiche that fals thingis
 Equall reportith like the thingis true,
 Was throughout Troie isled with prest wingis
 Fro man to man, and made his tale all newe,
 How Calchas doughtir with her brightè hewe
 At parlyment, withouthin wordis more,
 Igrauntid was in charge of Antenore.

The whiche tale anon right as Creseide
 Had herd; she, whiche that of her fathirrought
 (As in this case) right naught, ne when he deid
 Full busily to Jupiter besought
 Yeve him mischaunce that this trefis brought:
 But, shortly, lest these talis sothè were
 She durst at no wight askin it for fere.

As she that had her hert and all her minde
 On Troilus iset so wondir fast
 That all this world ne might her love unbind
 Ne Troilus out of her hertè cast,
 She would ben his while that her life maie last;
 And she thus brennith bothe in love and drede
 So that she ne wist what was best to rede.

But as men sene in tounè and all about,
 That women use ther frendis to visite,
 So to Creseide of women came a rout
 For pitous joie, and wendin her desite,
 And with ther talis, dere inough a mite;
 These women, whiche that in the cite dwell;
 Thai set hem doune, and saied as I shall tell.

(Quod first that one) I am glad truly
Bicause of you, that shall your fathir se.
Anothir saied, Iwis so am not I,
For all to little hath she with us be.

(Quod tho the thirde) I hope iwis that she
Shall bringin us the pece on every side,
That whan she goth Almightye God her gide! 693

Tho wordis and tho womannishe thingis
She herd 'hem right asthough she thennis were,
For God it wote her herte on othir thing is;
Although the body sat emong 'hem there
Her advertence is alwaie ellis where;
For Troilus full fast her soule sought;
Withoutin worde on him alwaie she thought. 700

These women that thus wendin her to plesse
Aboutin naught gon all ther talis spende;
Soche vanite ne can doen her none ese,
As she that all this menè while brende
Of othir passion than thei ywende,
So that she felte almoſte her hertè die
For wo, and werie of that companie. 707

For whichè might she no lengir restrain
Her teris, thei ganin so up to well,
That gavin signis of her bittir pain
In whiche her spirite was and must ydwell,
Remembring her from heven unto which hel
She fallin was sens she forgo the sight
Of Troilus, and forowfully she sight. 714

And thilke folk sitting her about
 Wendin that she had wept and lightid sore
 Bicause that she shouldin out of the rout
 Departin, and nevir pleie with them more;
 And thei that hadden knowin her of yore
 Se her so wepe; and thought it was kindeste,
 And eche of 'hem wept eke for her distresse. 727

And busilis thei gonin her comforte
 On thing God wot on which she litle thought,
 And with ther talis wendin her disporte,
 And to be glad thei oftin her besought;
 But soche an else therwith thei in her wrought
 Right as a man is esid for to fele
 For ache of hedde to clawen' him on his helle. 728

But after all this nice vanite
 Thei toke ther leve, and home thei wentin all;
 Creseide, full of forowfull pite,
 Into her chambre' up went out of the hall,
 And on her bedde she gan for dedde to fall,
 In purpose nevir thennis for to rise,
 And thus she wrought, as I shall you devise. 735

Her owndid heer, that fonnishe was of hewe,
 She rent, and eke her fingirs long and smale
 She wrong ful oft, and bade God on her rue,
 And with the death to doe bote on her bale;
 Her hewe, whilom bright, that tho was pale,
 Bare witnesse of her wo and her constreint,
 And thus she spake, sobbing in her compleint: 742

Alas! (quod she) out of this region
I, wofull wretche and infortunid wight,
And borne in curfid constellacioun,
More gon, and thus departin fro my knight!
Wo worthe, alas! that ilkè day'is light
On which I sawe him first with eyin twain
That causith me and I him all this pain! 749

Therwith the teris from her eyin two
Doun fell as shouris fuil in Aprill swithe,
Her whitè brest she bet, and for the wo
Astir the deth she cried a thousande fishe,
Sens he that wont her wo was for to lith
She mote forgon, for whiche disavinture
She helde her selfin a forlost cature. 756

She saied, How shall he doen and I also!
How should I live if that I from him twin!
O derè herte eke, that I lovè so,
Who shall that sorowe staen that ye ben in!
O Calchas, fathir! thine be all this sin!
O mothir mine, that clepid wer Argive,
Wo worth that daie that thou me bare on live! 763

To what fine should I live and sorowen thus?
How should a fishe withoutin watir dure?
What is Creseidè worth from Troilus?
How should a plant or' any othir cature
Livin withoute his kindly noriture?
For whiche fuil oft a byword here I seie,
That ertheles mote grene medis sone deye. 770

I shall doen thus, fens neither swerd ne dart
 Dare I none handle for the cruile,
 That ilkè daie that I fro you depart,
 If sorowe of that n'ill nat my bane be,
 Than shall no mete ne drinke ycome in me
 Till I my soule out of my brest unsheth,
 And thus my selvin woll I doen to deth.

And, Troilus, my clothis everichone
 Shull blackè ben, in tokining, herte swete!
 That I am as out of this worlde agone
 That wont ywas you to set in quiete,
 And of mine ordir aie, till deth me mete,
 The observaunce evir in your absence
 Shall sorowe ben, complaint and abstinence.

Mine herte, and eke the wofull ghost therein,
 Biqueth I with your spirite to complain
 Eternally, for thei shall never twin;
 For though in yerth ytwinnid be we twain,
 Yet in the felde of pite, out of pain,
 That hight Elyfium, we shall ben yfere,
 As Orpheus and Eurydice his fere.

Thus, hertè mine! for Antenör, alas!
 I fone shall be ychaungid, as I wene;
 But how shall ye doen in this wofull caas?
 How shall your tendir hertè thus fustein?
 But, hertè mine! foryet this sorowe' and tene,
 And me also; for, sothly for to seie,
 So ye well-fare I retche not for to deie.

How might it evir redde ben or ifong
The plaintis that she made in her distresse?
I n'ot, but as for me, my little tong,
If I discrivin would her hevinessle,
It should ymake her sorowe semè lesse
Than that it was, and childishly deface
Her hie complaint, and therefore I it pace. 805

Pandarus, whiche that sent from Troilus
Was to Crescide, as ye have herd devise,
That for the best it was accordid thus,
And he full glad to doen him that service
Unto Crescide in a full secrete wise,
There as she laie in tourment and in rage,
Came her to tell all wholly his message; 812

And fonde that she her selvin gan to trete
Full pitoussly, for with her saltè teres
Her brest and face ibathid was full wete,
Her mightie tressis of her sonnische heres
Unbroidin hangin all about her eres,
Whiche yavin him very signall mattire
Of deth, whiche that her hertè gan desire. 819

Whan she him sawe she gan for sorowe' anon
Her tery face atwixt her armis hide,
For whiche this Pandare is so wo bigon
That in the hous he might unneth abide,
As he that felt sorowe on every side,
For if Crescide had erst complainid fore
Tho gan she plain a thousande timis more, 826

And in her aspre pinnè thus she seide;
 Pandare, my cme, of joyis mo than two
 Was cause, causing first to me Crecide,
 That now transmuted bin in crail wo,
 Wher' shall I saie to you welcome or no,
 That aldirfirst me brought unto seruis
 Of love, alas! that endith in seche wife?

833

Endith than love in wo? ye, or men lieth,
 And every worldly blisse, as thinkith me;
 The ende of blisse aie sorowe occupieth;
 And who so trowith not that it so be
 Let him upon me wofull wretchè se,
 That my self hate, and aie my birthè curse,
 Feling alwaie fro wicke I go to worse.

840

Whofo me seeth seeth sorowe all atonis,
 Paine, turment, wo, and plaint, and eke distres;
 Out of my wofull bodie harme there none is,
 As langour, anguiste, cruill bittirnesse,
 Annoie, smarte, drede, furie, and eke siknesse:
 I trowe iwis from hevin teris rain
 For pite of my aspre' and cruill pain.

8.

Oxhos my sustir! full of discomfort,
 (Quod Pandarus) what thinkist thou to doe?
 Why ne' hast thou to thy selvin some resport?
 Why wilt thou thus thy self, alas! sordo?
 Leve all this werke, and take now hede to
 That shall saie, and herken' of gode entent
 This that by me thy Troilus the sent.

Tournid her the Creseide a wo making
So grete, that it a deth was for to se :
Alas! (quod she) what wordis maie ye bring,
What woll my dere herte fendin unto me,
Whiche that I dredè nevir more to se ?
Woll he have plaint or teris er I wende ?
I have inough if he theraftir sende. 861

She was right soche to sene in her visage
As is that wight that men on bere ybinde,
Her face, like of paradis the image,
Was all ichaungid in anothis kinde ;
The plaie, the laughtir, men wer wont to find
In her, and eke her joyis everichone,
Ben fledde ; and thus lieth Creseide alone. 866

About her eyin two a purple ring
Bitrent, in sothfast tokening of her pain,
That to behold it was a dedly thing,
For whiche Pandarus ne might nat restrain
The teris from his eyin for to rain ;
But nathèlles as he best might he seide
From Troilus these wordis to Creseide : 871

Lo ! nece, I trowe well ye han herd all how
The King, with othis lordis, for the best
Hath made eschaunge of Antenor and you,
That cause is of this sorowe and unrest,
But how this case doth Troilus molest
This maie none yerthly mann'is tong ysaie ;
For very wo his wit is all awaie : 881

For whiche we have so sorowed he and I,
 That into little it had bethe us flawe,
 But through my counsaile this daie, finally,
 He somewhat hath fro weping him withdrawe,
 And semith me that he desirith sawe
 With you to ben all night. for to devise
 Remedie' of this, if there were any wise. 889

This, short and plain, th' effect of my message,
 As ferforthe as my wit can comprehend,
 For ye that ben of tourment in soche rage
 Maie to no long prologue as now entende,
 And hereupon ye maie answere him sende;
 And for the love of God, my necè dere!
 So leve this wo or Troilus be here. 896

Grete is my wo, (quod she) and sighid sore,
 A she that felith dedly sharpe distresse,
 But vet to me his sorowe' is mckill more,
 That love him bet than he himself I gesse.
 Alas! for me hath he soche hevinesse?
 Can he for me so pitoussly complain?
 Iwis this sorowe doublith all my pain. 903

Grevous to me, God wot, it is to twin,
 (Quod she) but yet it hardir is to me
 To sene that sorowe which that he is in,
 For well wot I it woll my banè be,
 And die I woll in certain tho (quod she:)
 But bid him come er Deth that thus me threteth
 Drive out that ghost which in min hert ybeteth. 910

These wordis saied, she on her armis two
 Fill grusse. and gan to wepin pitously.
 (Quod Pandarus) Alas! why doe ye so,
 Sens ye well wote the time is faste by
 That he shall come? arise up hastily,
 That he you nat biwopin thus yfinde,
 But ye wol have him wode out of his minde: 917

For wist he that ye farde in this manere
 He would himselfin flea; and if I wende
 To have this fare he should not comin here
 For all the gode that Priam maie dispende,
 For to what fine he would anon pretende,
 That know I well; and forthy yet I seie
 So leve this sorowe, or, plainly, he woll deie: 924

And shapith you his sorowe for to' abredge
 And nat encrefin, lese necè swete!
 Bethe rathir to him cause of plat than edge,
 And wiche some wisdom ye his sorowes bete:
 What helpith it to wepin full a flete,
 Or though ye bothe in saltè teris dreint?
But is a time of cure aie than of pleint. 931

I menè thus, whan I him hithir bring,
 Sens ye be wise, and bothe of one assent,
 So shapith how to distourbe your going,
 Or come ayen sone astir ye be went:
 Women ben wise in short avisement;
 And let sene how your wit shall now availe,
 And what that I maie help it shall nat faile. 938

AND CRESEIDE. *Act IV.*

) and, uncle, truly
ght me to refrain
ight, and belily
all doen all my pain,
is every vain:
maie ben foundin falve
ertain on mine behalve. 945
, and Troilus he sought,
ne found him all alone,
life no lengir sought,
a goddis everichont
: praied and made his mone,
one out of this worlde to psee,
ought there was non othir grace. 950
ly, all the sothè for to seie,
lin in dispaire that daie
he shope him for to deie;
us was his argument alwaie,
: n'as but lornè, welawaie!
at cometh cometh by necessite, 955
en lorne it is my destine:
tainly this wote I well, he saide
efight of the divine purveiance
e alwaie me to forgon Creseide,
od seeth every thing out of doutaunce,
em disposith through his ordinaunce
meritis sothly for to be
ei shull comin by predestine.

But nathèlesse, alas! whom shall I leue?
For there ben gretè clerkis many one
That destine through argumentis preve,
And some ysain that nedely there is none,
But that fre choice is yeven' us everichone.
O welawaie! so sligh arne clerkis old
That I n'ot whose opinion I maie hold. 973

For some men sain that God seeth al biforne,
Ne God maie nat decevid ben parde;
Than mote it fallin, though men had it sworne,
That purveiaunce hath sene before to be;
Wherefore I saie that from eterne if he
Hath wist beforen our thought eke as our dede
We have no fre choice, as these clerkis rede. 980

For othir thought nor othir dede also
Might nevir ben but soche as purveiaunce,
Whiche maie not ben discevid nevir mo,
Hath feled biforne withoutin ignoraunce;
For if there might yben a variaunce
To writhin out fro Godd'is purveying
There n'ere no prescience of thing comming; 987

But it were rathir an opinion
Uncertain, and no stedfast forseing;
And certis that were an abuson
That God should have no perfect clere weting
More than we men, that have doutous wening;
But soche an errour upon God to gesse
Were false and foule, and wickid cursidnesse. 994

Eke this is an opinion of some
 That have ther top ful high and smoth ifshore,
 Thei fain right thus, that thing is nat to come
 For that the prescience hath sene before
 That it shal come, but thei fain that therfore
 That it shall come, therefore the purveiaunce
 Wote it beforne withoutin ignoraunce. 1007

And in this manir this necessite
 Retournith in his place contrary' againe,
 For nedefully behovith it nat be
 That thilke thingis fallin in certaine
 That ben purveyed, but nedefully', as thei faine,
 Behovith it that thingis which that fall
 That thei in certaine ben purveyid all: 1008

I mene as though I laboured me in this
 To enquire which thing cause of which thing be,
 As whethir that the prescience of God is
 The certaine cause of the necessite
 Of thingis that to comin be parde,
 Or if necessite of thing coming
 Be the cause certaine of the purveying. 1015

But nowe ne' enforce I me not in shewing
 How the' ordir of the causis stant, but wot I
 That it behovith that the befalling
 Of thingis wistè before certainly
 Be necessarie, al seme it not therby
 That prescience put falling necessarye
 To thing to come, al sal it soule or faire: 1022

For if there sit a man yonde on a fe,
Than by necessite behovith it
That certis thine opinion sothe be
That wenist or conjectist that he sit;
And furthirovir now ayenwarde hit,
Lo! right so is it on the part contrarie,
As thus; now herkin, for I wol nat tarie: 1029

I say that if the opinion of the
Be sothe for that he sit, than say I this,
That he mote sittin by necessite,
And thus necessite in eithir is;
For in him nede of sitting is iwis,
And in the nede of sothe; and thus forsothe
There mote necessite ben in you bothe. 1036

But thou maist saine, the man sit nat therefore
That thine opinion of his sitting soth is,
But rathir for the man fate there before,
Therefore is thine opinion sothe iwis:
And I say, though the cause of sothe is this
Cometh of his sitting, yet necessite
Is enterchaungid bothe in him and the. 1043

Thus in the samè wise out of doutaunce
I maie wel makin, as it semith me,
My resoning of Godd's purveyaunce,
And of the thingis that to comin be,
By whichè reson men maie wel ise
That thilkè thingis that in erthe befall
That by necessite thei comin all: 1050

8

For although that this thing shall come iwis,
herfore is it purveyid certainly,
Nat that it cometh for it purveyid is;
Yet nathelesse behoveth it nedefully
That thing to come be purveyid trewely,
Or ellis thingis that purveyid be
That thei betidin by neceffite.

And thus suffisith right inough certaine
For to distroie our fre choise everydell;
But now is this abusion to faine
That falling of the thingis temporell
Is cause of Godd'is prescience eternell;
Now trewily that is a false sentence
That thing to come should cause his prescien

What might I wene and I had suche a ch
But that God purveicth thing that is to con
For that it is to come, and ellis nought?
So might I wene that thingis all and some
That whilom ben bifall and ovircome
Ben cause of thilkè soveraine purveiaunce
That forwote al withoutin ignoraunce.

And ore al this yet say I more therto,
That right as when I wote there is a thin
Iwis that thing more nedefully be so,
Eke right so when I wote a thing comin
So mote it come; and thus the befalling
Of thingis that ben wiste before the tide
Thei mote not ben eschewid on no side.

Than said he thus, Almighty Jove in trone!
 That wottest of all this thing the sothfastnesse,
 Rewe on my sorowe, and do me dien sone,
 Or bring Creseide and me fro this distresse.
 And while he was in all this hevinesse,
 Disputing with himselfe in this matere,
 Came Pandarè in, and saide as ye maie here: 1085

O mighty God (quod Pandarus) in trone!
 Eigh! who saw er a wise man farin so?
 Why, Troilus! what thinkist thou to done?
 Hast thou such lust to ben thine ownè foe?
 What! parde yet is not Creseide ago?
 Why list the so thy selfe fordon for drede
 That in thine hed thine eyin semin dede. 1092

Hast thou nat livid many'a yere beforne
 Withoutin her, and farde ful wel at ese?
 Art thou for her and for none othir borne?
 Hath Kinde the wrought al only her to plesse?
 Let be, and thinke right thus in thy disese,
 That in the dice right as there fallin chaunces,
 Right so in love there come and gon plesaunces. 1099

And yet this is a wondir most of al
 Why thou thus sorowest, seth thou wost nat yit
 Touching her goyng how that it shal sal,
 Ne if she can her selfe distourbin it;
 Thou hast not yet assayid al her wit:
 A man maie al betime his neckè bede
 When it shal of, and sorowen at the nede. 1106

of al that I shal say:

ye and longe ibe,
etwixe us tway,
hinkith thus, that she
her hert'is privitye
, if I shal aright rede,
whiche thou art in drede. 1113

counsel is, whan it is night
and make of this an ende,
, through her grette might,
her grace unto us sende;

I certaine that she shal nat wende:
t thine hert a while in rest,
purpose, for it is the best. 1120

is answerde, and sighid sore,
ght wel, and I wil do right so,
m list he said unto him more:
hat it was time for to go

himselfe withoutin mo
ame, as he was wont to done,
hei wrought I shal you tellin sone. 11

that when thei gonin first to mete
: paine ther hertis for to twiste
hir of 'hem othir mighte grette,

in armis toke and aftir kiste;
: wofull of 'hem bothe ne wiste
at he was, ne might o word out bring
I erst, for wo and for sobbing.

The woful teris that thei letin fal
As bittir werin, out of teris kinde,
For paine, as is ligne aloes or gal;
So bittir teris wept nat, as I finde,
The wofull Myrrha through the barke and rinde,
That in this world ther n'is so hard an hert
That n'old have rewid on ther painis smert. **II 141**

But whan ther wofull very goſtis twaine
Returnid ben there as 'hem ought to dwell,
And that fomwhat to wekin gan the paine
By length of plainte, and ebbin gan the wel
Of ther falt teris, and the hert unſwel,
With brokin voice, all horſe for ſhright, Creſeide
To Troilus theſe ilkè wordis ſeide: **II 148**

O Jove! I die, and mercy the beſeche;
Helpe, Troilus: and therwithal her face
Upon his breſt ſhe laid, and loſt her ſpeche,
Her wofull ſpirite from his propir place
Right with the worde away in point to pace:
And thus ſhe lith with hewis pale and grene
That whilom freſh and fairiſt was to ſene. **II 155**

This Troilus that on her gan beholde,
Cleping her name, and ſhe lay as for ded,
Withoutin anſwere, and ſelte her limmes colde,
Her eyin throwin upwarde to her hed,
This forouful man can now non othir rede,
But oftin time her coldè mouthe he kiſte:
Where him was wo God and himſelf it wiſte. **II 162**

He riseth up, and long strait he her leide,
 For signe of life for aught he can or may
 Can he none finde in nothing of Cresseide,
 For whiche his songe ful oft is Welaway!
 But whan he sawe that spechèsse she lay,
 With sorowful voice, and hert of blisse al bare,
 He said how she was fro this world ifare.

So aftir that he long had her complained,
 His hondis wronge, and said that was to sey,
 And with his teris salt her brest berained,
 He gan tho teris wipin of full drey,

And pitously gan for the soule prey,
 And said, O Lord! that set artin thy trome,
 Rewe eke on me, for I shal folow' her sone.
 She colde was, and withoutin sentement,

For ought he wote, for brethe yet felte he
 And this was him a preignant argument
 That she was forth out of this worlde agon
 And when he saw there was non othir wo
 He gan ber limmis dresse in fuche manere
 As men don them that shall ben laide on

And aftir this with sterne and cruill he
 His swerd anon out of his sheeth he twigh
 Himselfe to sleen, how sore so that him
 So that his soule her soule folowin might
 There as the dome of Minos would it
 Sith Love and cruill Fortune it ne wou
 That in this world he lengir livin shou

Than said he thus, fulfild of high disdain;
O cruil Jove! and thou Fortune adverse!
This al and some is, falsely have ye slaine
Creseide, and sith ye may do me no werse,
Fie on your might and werkis so diverse!
Thus cowardely ye shul me nevir winne;
There shal no deth me fro my lady twinne. 1195

For I this world, sith ye have slain her thus,
Wol let, and folow' her spirit lowe or hic;
Shal nevir lovir saine that Troilus
Dare nat for serè with his lady die,
For certaine I wol bere her companie;
But sithe ye wol nat suffre' us livin here,
Yet suffrith that our soulis ben ifere. 1204

And thou, Cite! in whiche I live in wo,
And thou, Priam! and brethrin al ifere!
And thou, my mothir! farwel, for I go,
And Atropos! make redy thou my bere,
And thou, Creseidè! o swete hertè dere!
Receve thou now my spirite, would he sey,
With swerde at hert, al redy for to dey. 1211

But as God would of swough she tho abraide,
nd gan to fighe, and Troilus! she cride;
nd he answerid, Lady mine, Creseide!
vin ye yet? and let his swerde doune glide.
, hertè mine! that thankid be Cupide,
god she) and therwithal she forè sight,
d he began to glade her as he might; 1218

Toke her in armis two, and kiste her ofte,
And her to glad he did al his entent,
For whiche her gult, that flickered aie alofte,
Into her wofull hert aien it went;
But at the laste, as that her eyin glent
Aside, anon she gan his swerde aspie
As it lay bare, and gan for fere to crie, 1225

And askid him why he had it out drawe?
And Troilus anon the cause her tolde,
And how himself therwith he would have flawe;
For whiche Creseide upon him gan beholde,
And gan him in her armis fast to folde,
And saide, O mercy, God! lo whiche a dede!
Alas! how nighe we werin bothè dede! 1232

Than if I ne hadde spokin, as grace was,
Ye would have slaine your selfe anon? quod she.
Ye, doutlesse. And she answerde, Alas!
For by that ilke Lorde that madè me
I n'olde a forlong waie on live have be,
Aftir your deth, to have ben crounid quene-
Of al the londe the sunne on shinith shene; 1239

But with this selvè swerde which that here is
My selfin I would have slaine (quod she) tho.
But ho! for we have right inough of this,
And let us rise and straite to beddè go,
And there let us yspekin of our wo,
For by that morter whiche that I se brenne
Know I ful well that day is nat far henne. 1246

Whan thei wer in ther bedde in armis folde
Naught was it like tho nightis here beforne,
For petously eche othir gan beholde,
As thei that haddin al ther blisse ilorne,
Bewailing al the daie that thei were borne,
Till at the last this wofull wight Creseide
To Troilus these ilkè wordis seide:

1153

Lo, hertè mine! wel wote ye this, (quod she)
That if a wight alwaie his wo complaine,
And sekith nat how holpin for to be,
It n'is but folie and encrece of paine;
And sens that here assemblid be we twaine
To findin bothe of wo that we ben in,
It were all time right sone for to begin.

1160

I am a woman, as ful wel ye wotte,
And as I am avisid sodainly,
So wol I tel it you while it is hotte:
Me thinkith thus, that neithir ye nor I
Ought halfe this wo to makin skilfully,
For there is art inough for to redresse
That yet is misse, and sleen this hevinesse.

1167

Soth is, the wo the whiche that we ben inne,
For aught I wote, for nothing ellis is
But for the causè that we should ytwinne;
Confidrid al there n'is no more amis:
And what is than a remedy' unto this
But that we shape us sone for to mete?
This al and some is, my dere hertè swete!

1174

Now that I shal wel bringin it aboute
 To comen' ayen sone aftir that I go
 Therof am I no manir thing in doute,
 For dreddelesse within a weke or two
 I shal ben here; and that it may be so
 By allè right, and that in wordis few,
 I shal you wel an hepe of wayis shewe: 1181

For whiche I woll nat makin longe sermon,
 For time ilque may not recovered be,
 But I wol go to my conclusion,
 And to the beste in aught that I can se;
 And for the love of God forgive it me
 If I speke aught aienst your hert's reſte,
 For ſrewily I ſpeke it for the beste; 1188

Making alway a proteſtacion,
 That in effect this thing that I ſhall ſay
 N'is but to ſhewin you my mocion
 To find unto our helpe the beſte way,
 And takith it none othirwiſe I pray;
 For, finally, what ſo ye me commande
 That wol I done, for that is no demaunde. 1195

Now herkenith this: Ye have well underſtond
 My goyng grauntid is by parliment,
 So ſerforth that it may not ben withſtond
 For al this world, as by my jugement;
 And ſithe there helpith none aviſement
 To lettin it, lette it paſſe out of mind,
 And let us ſhape a bettir waie to finde. 1202

The sothe is this; the twinning of us twaine
Wol us disese and cruilly anoie,
But him behovith somtime havin paine
That servith Love, if that he wol have joie;
And sith I shal no farthir out of Troie
Than I maie ride aien on halfe a morowe
It ought the lasse causin us for to sorowe; 1309

So as I shal nat now ben hid in mewe,
That day by day, min ownè hertè dere!
Sens wel ye wote that it is nowe a trewe,
Ye shal ful wel al mine estate yhere,
And er that truce is done I shal ben here;
And thus have ye both Antenor iwonne
And me also. Bethe glad now if ye conne. 1316

And thinke right thus, Creseide is now agon,
But what? she shal come hastily ayen:
And whan? alas! by God, lo, right anon,
Er dayis ten, this dare I safely faine,
And than as erste shall we be bothè faine,
So as we shall toghethers evir dwell,
That al this worlde ne might our blisse tell. 1323

I se that oft time, there as we ben nowe,
That for the beste, our counsaile for to hide,
Ye speke nat with me nor I with you
In fourtènight, ne se you go ne ride;
And may ye nat ten dayis than abide,
For mine honour, in suche an avinture?
I wis ye mowe, or ellis lite endure. 1330

IS AND CRESEIDE.

Boke IV.

owe that all my kin is here
my fathir be,
ir thingis al ifere,
lerè hertè ye,
lde levin for to fe
e, as wide as it hath space,
ir Jov'is face.

1337

ye my fathir in this wise
se me, but for drede
unc that folkis me dispise
a for his unhappy dede?
ny fathir what life that I lede?
t in Troie how wel I fare
my wending nat to care.

1344

hat every day eke more and more
of pece, and it supposid is
the Quene Helena shal restore,
is us restore that is amis;
there ne were comfort none but this,
purposin pece on every side,

13

he bett at ese of herte abide:
that it be pece, mine hertè dere!
ure of the pece mote nedis drive
en must entrecommunin ifere,
and fro eke ride and gone as blive
as thicke as been flien from an hive,
very wight have liberty to bleve
e as him list the bet withoutin leve.

And though so be that pece ther maie be none,
Yet hither, though ther nevir pece ne were,
I must ycome, for whidir should I gone?
Or how, mischauncè! should I dwellin there
Among tho men of armis evre' in fere?
For whiche, as wisely God my soulè rede,
I can nat sene wherof ye shouldin drede. 1365

Have here anothir way, if it so be
That al this thing ne maie you not suffice:
My fathir, as ye knowin wel parde,
Is holdin olde and ful of covitise,
And I right nowe have foundin al the gife
Withoutin nette wherwith I shal him hent,
And herkenith now if that ye wol assent. 1372

Lo! Troilus, men saine full harde it is
The wolfe ful and the wedir whole to have;
This is to saine, that men full oft iwis
Mote spendin parte the remnant for to save;
For aie with golde men maie the hert ygrave
Of him that is set upon covitise;
And how I mene I shal it you devise. 1379

The movable whiche I have in this tounce
Unto my fathir shal I take, and saie,
That right for trust and for salvacioun
It sent is from a frende of his or twaie,
The which frendis do fervently him praie
To sendin astir more, and that in hie,
While that this toun stapt thus in jeopardie; 1386

And that shal be of golde huge quantite;
 Thus shal I sain, but lest folke it aspide
 This maie be sent by no wight but by me:
 I shal eke shewin him, if pece betide,
 What frendis that I have on every side
 To doe the wrathe of Priamus to pace
 Towardis him, and don him stand in grace. 1393

So what for o thing and for othir, fwere!
 I shal him so enchauntin with my sawes
 That right in hevin his foule shal he mete;
 For al Apollo or his clerkis lawes,
 Or calculing, availith nat thre hawes;
 Desire of golde shal so his foulè blende
 That as me lifte I shall wel make an ende. 1400

And if he would aught by his fort it preve
 If that I lie, in certaine I shal fonde
 Disturbin him, and plucke him by the fleve,
 Makin his forte, and berin him on honde,
 He hath nat wel the goddis undirfonde,
 For goddis speke in amphibologies,
 And for o sothe thei tellin twenty lies: 1407

Eke dredè fond first goddis, I suppose,
 Thus shal I faine, and that his cowarde herte
 Made him amis the goddis text to glofe
 Whan he for ferdè out of Troiè ferte;
 And but I makin him sone to converte,
 And done my rede within a day or twey,
 I wol to you obligè me to dey.

And trewily, as writtin wel I finde,
That al this thing was said of gode entent,
And that her hertè trewè was and kinde
Towardis him, and spake right as she ment,
And that she starfe for wo nigh when she went,
And was in purpose evir to be trewe,
This writin thei that of her werkis knewe. 1421

This Troilus, with hert and cris sprad,
Herde al this thing deviïd to and fro,
And verily it semid that he had
The selvin witte, but yet to let her go
His hertè misforyave him evirmo;
But finally he gan his hertè wrest
To trustin her, and toke it for the best; 1428

For whiche the grete fury of his penaunce
Was queint with hope, and therwith 'hem bitwene
Began for joyè the amorous daunce;
And as the birdis when the sunnè shene
Delitin in ther songe in levis grene,
Right so the wordis that thei spake ifere
Delitin them, and made ther hertis chere. 1435

But nathèlesse the wending of Creseide
For al this world may nat out of his minde,
For whiche ful oft he petously her preide
That of her heste he might her trewe yfinde,
And saide her, Certis if ye be unkinde,
And but ye come at daie set into Troie,
Ne shal I nere have hele, honor, ne joie: 1442

For all so sothe as sunne uprist to morow,
 And God so wisely thou me wofull wretche
 To rest ybring out of this cruil sorow,
 I wol my selvin fle if that ye dretche;
 But of my deth though litil be to retche,
 Yet er that ye me causin so to smerte
 Dwel rathir here mine ownè dere fwete herte! 1449

For trewily, mine ownè lady dere!
 'The sleightis yet that I have herd you sters
 Ful shapely ben to fallin al ifere,
 For thus men saith, *That one thinkith the bere,*
But al anothir thinkith the ledere:
 Your fire is wise, and said is out of drede
Men may the wise outrenne and nat outrede. 1456

It is full harde to haltin unespied
 Before a crepil, for he can the crafte;
 Your fathir is in sleight as Argus cied,
 For al be' it that his movble' is him birafte
 His oldè sleight is yet so with him laste
 Ye shal not blende him for your womanhede,
 Ne faine aright, and that is al my drede. 1463

I n'ot if pece shall evirmo betide,
 But pece or no, for ernest ne for game,
 I wote sith Calchas on the Grekis side
 Hath onis ben, and lost so foule his name,
 He dare no more come here ayen for shame,
 For whiche that we, for ought I can espy,
 'To trustin on n'is but a fantasie. 1470

Ye shal eke sene your fathir shall you glofe
To ben a wife, and, as he can wel preche,
He shal some Greke so prefe and wel alofe,
That ravishin he shal you with his speche,
Or do you done by force, as he shal teche,
And Troilus, on whom you n'il have routh,
Shal causelesse so stervin in his trouth.

1477

And ore al this your fathir shal dispise
Us al, and saine this cite is but lorne,
And that th' assègè nevir shal arise;
For why? the Grekis have it allè sworne,
Til we ben slaine and doun our wallis torne:
And thus he shal you with his wordis fere,
That aie drede I that ye wol blevin there.

1484

Ye shall eke sene so many' a lusty knight
Among the Grekis, ful of worthinesse,
And eche of 'hem with hertè, wit, and might,
To plesin you done al his businesse,
That ye shull dullin of the rudinesse
Of us the sely Trojans, but if routhe
Remordin you or vertue of your trouthe.

1491

And this to me so grevoufe is to thinke
That fro my brest it wol my soulè rende,
Ne dredèlesse in me there may nat sinke
O gode opinion if that ye wende;
For why? your fathir's sleightis wol us shende:
And if ye gone, as I have tolde you yore,
So thinke I n'am but ded withoutin more:

1498

L ij

AND CRESIDE. *Beh. IV.*

nable, true, and pitous, bert
ercie I you prais,
ipre painis finert,
as that I shal you saie,
y betwixt us twaie,
ly' is whan a man maie chefe
allauunce for to lefe. 1505

at sens we mowe or daie
and ben togither so,
: to puttin in assaie
lin to your fathir go)
in come aien or no?
at it were a grete folie
irnesse in jeopardie. 1512

ly to spekin of substaunce,
y we bothè with us lede
e in honour and plesaunce
è that we shall ben dede,
may eschewin all this drede;
hir waie ye can recorde
wis maie therwith nat acorde. 1

dily ne dredith no povertè,
kin and frendis ellis where
gh we comin in our barè sherte
nevir lacke ne golde ne gere,
onourid while we dweltin there:
we' anone, for as in mine entent
ne best, if that ye wol assent.

Creseidè with a sighe right in this wise
Answerid him; Iwis, my dere hert trewe!
We maie well stele away as ye devise,
And findin suche unthrifty wayis newe,
But astirwarde ful fore it wol us rewe;
And helpe me God so at my mostè nede
As causelesse ye suffrin al this drede: 1533

For thilkè day that I for cherishing
Or drede of fathir, or for othir wight,
Or for estate, delite, or for weding,
Be false to you, my Troilus, my knight!
Saturnus doughtir Juno, through her might,
As wode as Atalanta do me dwell
Eternally in Styx, the pit of hell. 1540

And this on every god celestiall
I swere it you, and eke on eche goddesse,
On every nymph and deite infernall,
On Satyrys and Faunys more and lesse,
That halvè goddis ben of wildirnesse;
And Atropos my thred of life to brest
If I be false. Now trowe me if you lest. 1547

And thou, Simois, that as an arowe clere
Through Troie rennist aie downward to the se,
Be witnesse of this worde that said is here,
That thilkè day that I untrewè be
To Troilus, mine ownè hertè fre!
That thou returne backwarde unto thy well,
And I with body and soule sinke to hell. 1554

But that ye speke awaie thus for to go,
And lettin al your frendis, God forbede
For any woman that ye shouldin so!
And namily fens Troie hath now such nede
Of helpe; and eke of o thing takith hede,
If this were wiste, my life laie in balaunce
And your honor, God shilde us fro mischaunce! 1561

And if so be that pece hereaftir take,
As al daie happith aftir angre game,
Why, Lorde! the sorow' and wo ye woldin make
That ye ne darst comin ayein for shame!
And er that ye jeopardin so your name
Beth nat to hasty in this hottè fare,
For hasty man ne wantith nevir care. 1568

What trowe ye the peple eke al aboute
Would of it say? it is ful light to' arede;
Thei woldin say, and fwere it out of doute,
That love ne drave you nat to don this dede,
But luste voluptuous and cowarde drede:
Thus were al losse iwis, mine hertè dere!
Your honour, whiche that now so shinith clere. 157

And also thinkith on mine honeste,
That flourith yet, how soule I should it shende,
And with what filth it spottid shouldè be
If in this forme I shouldè with you wende:
Ne though I lived unto the worldis ende
My name should I nevir ayeinward winne: 1
Thus were I lost, and that were routh and sinne

And forthy fle with reson al this hete;
 Men faine, *The suffraunt overcometh parde,*
Eke Who so wol have lefe be lefe mote lete :
 Thus makith vertue of necessite
 By pacience, and thinke that lorde is he
 Of Fortune aie that naught woll of her retch,
 And she ne dauntith no wight but a wretch. **1589**

And trustith this, that certis, hertè swete!
 Or Phœbus sustir, Lucina the shene,
 The Lion passith out of this Arite
 I woll ben here withoutin any wene;
 I mene, as helpe me Juno, hevin's quene,
 The tenth daie, but if that deth me assaile,
 I woll you sene withoutin any faile. **1596**

And'now, so this be sothe (quod Troilus)
 I shall well suffre unto the tenth daie,
 Sens that I se that nede it mote ben thus;
 But for the love of God, if it be maie,
 So let us stelin privily awaie,
 For evre' in one as for to live in rest,
 Mine hertè saieth that it woll be the best. **1603**

O mercie, God! what life is this? (quod she)
 Alas! ye flea me thus for very tene;
 I se well now that ye mistrustin me,
 For by your wordis it is well isene:
 Now for the love of Cynthia the shene
 Mistrust me nat thus causèlesse for routh,
 Sens to be true I have you plight my trowth. **1610**

And thinkith wel that sometime it is wit
To spendin a time a time for to win ;
Ne parde lorne am I nat fro you yet,
Though that we ben a daie or two atwin :
Drive out the fantasies you have within,
And truſtith me, and lewith eke your ſorow,
Or here my trowth, I wol nat live til morow : 1617

For if ye wiſt how ſore it doeth me ſmerte
Ye wouldè ceſſe of this; for God thou woſt
The pure ſpirite ywepith in mine herte
To ſene you wepin whiche that I love moſt,
And that I mote gon to the Grekis hoſte;
Ye, n'ere it that I wiſt a remedie
To come ayen right here I wouldè die. 1624

But certis I am not ſo nice a wight
That I ne can imaginin a waie
'To come ayen that daie that I have hight,
For who maie holden' a thing that wol awaie ?
My fathir naught, for all his queinte plaie ;
And by my thrift my wending out of Troie
Anothir daie ſhall tourne us all to joie. 1631

Forthy with all mine herte I you beſeke,
If that you liſt doen aught for my praierc,
And for the love whiche that I love you eke,
That er that I departin fro you here
That of ſo gode a comfort and a chere
I maie you ſene that ye maie bring at reſt
Mine hertè, whiche is at the poinct to breſt. 1638

And ore al this I praie you, quod she tho,
Mine ownè hert'is sothfast suffisaunce!
Sith I am thine all whole withoutin mo,
That while that I am absent no plesaunce
Of othir doe me fro your remembraunce,
For I am er agast; for why? men rede
That love is thing aie full of busie drede. 1645

For in this worlde there livith ladie none,
If that ye were untrue, as God defende!
That so betrayid were or wo begon
As I, that allè trouthe in you entende;
And douteles if that I othir wende
I n'ere but dedde, and er ye cause yfinde
For Godd'is love so beth me naught unkinde. 1652

To this answerid Troilus, and seide,
Now God, to whom there n'is no cause iwrie,
Me glad, as wis I nevir to Creseide,
Sithe thilkè daie I sawe her first with-eye,
Was false, ne nevir shall till that I die:
At short wordis, well ye maie me bileve;
I can no more; it shall be founde at preve. 1659

Graunt mercy, gode hert mine! iwis, (quod she)
And, blisful Venus! let me nevir sterue
Er I maie stonde of plesaunce in degre
To quite him well that so well can deserve,
And while that God my wit will me conserve
I shall so doen, so true I have you found,
That aie honour to me ward shall rebounde: 1666

For truſtith well that your eſtate roiall,
Ne veine delite, nor onely worthineſſe
Of you in werre or turnaie marciall,
Ne pompe, arraie, nobley, or eke richeſſe,
Ne madin me to rue on your diſtreſſe,
But morall vertue, groundid upon trouth,
That was the cauſe I firſt had on you routh : 11

Eke gentle hert, and manhode that ye had,
And that ye had (as me thought) in diſpite
Every thing that ſownid into bad,
As rudeneſſe, and pepliſhe appetite,
And that your reſon bridlid your delite ;
This made abovin every cature
That I was yours, and ſhall while I maie dure. 1

And this may length of yeris nat fordoe,
Ne remuable Fortunè deface,
But Jupiter, that of his might maie doe
The ſorowfull be glad, ſo yeve us grace
Er nightis tenne to metin in this place,
So that it maie your herte and mine ſuffiſe :
And fare now well, for time is that ye riſe. 1

And aſtir that thei long iplainid had,
And oft ikift, and ſtraite in armis folde,
The daie gan riſe, and Troilus him clad,
And ruſully his ladie gan behold,
As he that felt of deth'is caris cold,
And to her grace he gan him recommaunde;
Where he was wo this holde I no demaunde : 1

For mann'is hedde imaginin ne can,
Ne' entendement confidir, ne tongue tell,
The cruill painis of this wofull man,
That passin every tourment doune in hell;
For whan he sawe that she ne might ydwell,
Whiche that his soule out of his body rent,
Withoutin more out of the chambre' he went. 1701

Explicit liber quartus.

INCIPIT LIBER QUINTUS.

APROCHIN gan the fatall destine
That Jovis hath in disposicioun,
And to you angrie Parcæ, fustrin thre,
Committith to doen execucioun,
For whiche Creseidè must out of the toun,
And Troilus shall dwellin forth in pine
Till Lachesis his threde no lengir twine. 7

The goldin tressid Phœbus high on loft
Thryis had allè with his bemis clere
The snowis molte, and Zephirus as oft
Ibrought ayen the tendir levis grene,
Sens that the sonne of Hecuba the Quene
Began to love her first, for whom his sorowe
Was all that she departin should amorowe. 14

Full reu was at the Diome-
 Creseide un the Greke herte blede,
 For sorow whiche was bette-
 As she that ne at what tyme
 And truely, as in booke
 Men wisse neu man ha-
 Ne was so lothe out of a tou-
 This Troilus with in re-
 As man that hath his herte
 Was waiting on his lady's
 As she that was the sothe
 Of all his lust or joyis her-
 But Troilus, now farwell a-
 For shalt thou nevir sene he-
 Soth is, that while he bod-

He gan his wo full manly for to
 That well unneth it sene was in h-
 But at the yatè there she should c-
 With certain folke he hovid her to
 So wo bigon, all would he not him pla-
 That on his hors unneth he fate for pa-
 For ire he quoke, so gan his herte go
 Whan Diomedè on hors gan him to dresse,

And saied unto himself this ilke sawe;
 Alas! (quod he) this foule a wretchidnesse
 Why suffre' I it? why n'ill I it redresse?
 Were it nat bet at onis for to die
 Thus to drie?

I I make at onis riche and pore
 ough to doen er that she go?
 bring all Troie upon a rore?
 slaen this Diomedè also?
 rathir with a man or two
 aie? Why woll I this endure?
 helpin to mine ownè cure? 49
 he n'oldè doen so fell a dede
 fain, and why him list it spare:
 erte alwaie a manir drede
 eseide, in rumour of this fare,
 : hen slain: lo! this was al his care,
 rtain, as I fayid yore,
 een withoutin wordis more. 56
 yhan she redy was to ride,
 ully sighed, and saied Alas!
 he mote for aught that maie betide,
 she ritte a full sobirly pafe;
 ne othir remedy' in this case:
 lir is though that her fore smert
 orgoith her owne swetè herte? 63
 ilus in gife of curtisic,
 : on hood, and with an hugè rout
 , rode and did her companie,
 l the valey ferre without,
 : would have riddin out of doubt
 and wo was him to gone so fane,
 he must, and it was eke so doen. 70
 X. M

And right with that was Antenor icome
Out of the Grekis hoste, and every wight
Was of him glad, and saied he was welcom
And Troilus, all n'ere his hertè light,
He painid him with all his fullè might
Him to withholde of weping at the left,
And Antenor he kist, and made grete fest.

And therewithall he must his leve ytake,
And cast his eye upon her pitously,
And nere he rode, his causè for to make,
To take her by the honde all sobirlye.
And Lorde! so she gan wepin tendirlye,
And he full soft and flyghly gan her seie,
Now holde your daie, and doe me not to d

With that his courfir tournid he about
With face full pale, and unto Diomede.
No worde he spake, ne none of all his rout
Of whiche the sonne of Tydeus toke hede,
As he that kouthè morè than the crede
In soche a craft, and by the rain her bent,
And Troilus to Troie homwardis went.

This Diomede, that lad her by the brid
Whan that he sawe the folke of Troie awa
Thought all my labor shall not ben on ide
if that I maie, for somewhat shall I saie,
For at the worst it shortin maie our waie;
I have herd saie eke timis twise twelve
He is a sole that woll foryete him selve.

But nathèlesse this thought he well enough,
 That certainly I am aboutin naught
 If that I speke of love or make it tought,
 For doutilefs if she have in her thought
 Him that I gesse he maie not ben ibrought
 So sone awaie; but I shall finde a mene
 That she nat yet wete shall what that I mene. 105

This Diomede, as he that could his gode,
 Whan this was doen gan fallin forth in speche
 Of this and that, and askin why she stode
 In soche difese? and gan her eke heseche,
 That if that he encrefin might or eche
 With any thing her esè that she should
 Commaunde it him, and said he doen it would: 112

For truilly he swore her as a knight
 That ther n'as thing with which he might her plese
 That he n'okde doén his pain and al his might
 To doen it, for to doen her herte an ese,
 And prayid her she would her sorowe' apese,
 And saied, Iwis we Grekis can have joie
 To honour you as well as folke of Troie. 119

He said eke thus, I wot you thinkith strange,
 No wondir is, for it is to you newe,
 Th'acquaintaunce of these Trojans for to chaunge
 For folke of Grece, which that ye nevir knewe;
 But wouldè nevir God but if as true
 A Greke ye should emong us all yfinde
 As any Trojan is, and eke as kinde. 126

And by the cause I swore you, lo! right now
To ben your frende, and help you to my might,
And for that more acquaintance eke of you
Have I had than anothir straungir wight,
So fro this forth I praiſe you daie and night
Commaundith me, how fore so that me smerte,
To doen all that maie like unto your herte: 133

And that ye me wold as your brothir trete,
And takith not my frendſhip in diſpite;
And though your ſorowes ben for thingis grete,
N'ot I nat why, but out of more reſpite
Mine hert hath for to' amende it grete delite,
And if I maie your harmis nat redreſſe
I am right ſorie for your hevineſſe: 140

For though ye Trojans with us Grekis wroth
Have many' a daie ben, alwaie yet parde
O god of Love in ſothe we ſervin bothe:
And for the love of God, my ladie fre,
Whom ſo ye hate as beth not wroth with me,
For truily there can no wight you ſerve
That halfe ſo loth your wrathè wold deſerve. 147

And n'ere it that we ben ſo nere the tent
Of Calchas, whiche that ſene us bothè maie,
I wold of this you tell all mine entent;
But this enſelid till anothir daie:
Yeve me your honde; I am and ſhall be aie,
God help me ſo, while that my life maie dure,
Your owne abovin evèry creature. 154

Thus said I nere er now to woman borne,
For God mine herte as wisely gladè so
I lovid nevir woman here beforne
As paramours, ne nevir shall no mo;
And for the love of God be not my fo,
All can I not to you, my ladie dere!
Complain aright, for I am yet to lere. 165

And wondrich nought, mine ownè lady bright!
Though that I speke of love to you thus blive,
For I have herd or this of many' a wight
That lovid thing he nere saw in his live;
Eke I am not of powir for to strive
Ayenst the god of Love, but him obaie
I woll awaie, and mercie I you praie. 168

There beth so worthy knightis in this place,
And ye so faire, that everiche of 'hem all
Woll painin him to stondin in your grace;
But might to me so faire à grace befall
That ye me for your servaunt wouldè call,
So lowly ne so truily you serve
N'll none of 'hem as I shall till I serve. 175

Creseide unto that purpose lite answerde,
As she that was with sorowe' oppressid so
That in effect she naught his talis herde,
But here and there now here a worde or two;
Her thought her sorowfull herte brass atwo,
For whan she gan her fathir ferre espie
Well nigh doune of her hors she gan to fie. 182

But nathèlesse she thonkith Diomede
 Of all his travaile and his godè chere,
 And that him list his frendship to her bede,
 And she acceptith it in godè manere,
 And woll do fain that is him lefe and dère,
 And trustin him she would, and well she might,
 As sayid she, and from her hors she' alight. 189.

Her fathir hath her in his armis nome,
 And twentie times he kist his doughtir swete,
 And saied, O dère doughtir mine! welcome.
 She said eke she was fain with him to mete,
 And stode forth still, mild, muet, and mansuete.
 But here I leue her with her fathir dwell,
 And forthe I woll of Troilus you tell. 196

To Troie is come this wofull Troilus
 In forowe abovin all forowes smert,
 With felon loke and with face dispiteous,
 Tho sodainly doune from his hors he stert,
 And through his paleyse with a swollen hert
 To chambir went; of nothing toke he hede,
 Ne none to him dare speke o worde for drede. 203

And there his forowes that he sparid had
 He yave an issue large, and Deth he cride,
 And in his throwis frenetike and mad
 He cursith Jove, Apollo, and Cupide,
 He cursith Bachus, Ceres, and Cypride,
 His birthe, himself, his fate, and eke Nature,
 And save his ladie evèry creature. 210

To bed he goth, and weilith there and turneth
In furie as doeth Ixion in hell,
And in this wife he nigh till daie sojourneth,
But tho began his herte alite unswell
Through teris which that gonnin up to wel,
And pitoufly he cried upon Creseide,
And to himself right thus he spake and seide: 217

Where is mine ownè ladie lefe and dere?
Where is her whitè breft? where is it? where?
Where ben her armis and her eyin clere.
That yesterdaie this timè with me were?
Now maie I wepe alone many a tere,
And graspe about I maie, but in this place
Save a pilowe I find naught to embrace. 224

How shall I doen? whan shall she come again?
I n'ot, alas! Why let I her so go?
As wouldè God I had as tho be slain!
O herte mine, Creseidè! o swetè fo!
O ladie mine! that I love and no mò,
To whom for evirmore mine herte I vowe,
Se how I die; ye n'll me not rescowe! 231

Who seith you now, my right lodèsterre?
Who sittith now or stant in your presence?
Who can comfortin now your hert'is werre,
Now I am gon whom ye yeve audience?
Who spekith for me now in my absence?
Alas! no wight, and that is all my care,
For well wote I as ill as I ye fare. 238

How should I thus ten dayis full endure
Whan I the first night havin all this tene?
And how shall she eke, sorowfull creature,
For tendirnesse how shall she this sustene
Soche wo for me? o! pitous, pale, and grene,
Shall woxin ben her freshe womanly face
For langour er she tourne unto this place.

245

And whan he fill in any flombringis
Anon begin he shouldè for to grone,
And dremin of the dredfullist thingis
That might yben, as mete he were alone
In place horrible, making aie his mone,
Or metin that he was emongis all
His enemies, and in their bondis fall.

252

And therewithall his bodie shouldè starte,
And with the starte all sodainly awake,
And soche a tremour fele about his herte,
That of the fere his bodie shouldè quake,
And therewithall he should a noife ymake,
And semin as though he should fallin depe,
From high aloft, and than he wouldè wepe,

259

And rewın on himself so pitously
That wondir was to here his fantasie;
Anothir time he shouldè mightily
Comfort himself, and sain it was folie
So causèlesse soche drede and wo to drie,
And eft begin his aspre sorowes newe,
That every man might on his painis rewe.

266

ho could tell all aright, or full discriue
 ro, his plaint, his langour, and his pine?
 ll the men that han or ben on live :
 , Redir, maieſt thy ſelf full well devine
 ſoche a wo my wit can not define;
 ell ſor to write it ſhould I ſwinke
 that my wit is werie it to thinke. 273
 hevin yet the ſteris werin ſene,
 ugh full pale iwoxin was the mone,
 whitin began the horizon ſhene
 towardis, as it is wont to doen,
 Phœbus with his roſie cartè ſone
 ſtir that to dreſſe him up to fare
 i Troilus hath ſent aſtir Pandare. 280
 is Pandare, that of all the daie beforne
 ight have comin Troilus to ſe,
 ugh that he on his hedde it had ſworne,
 ith the King Priam al daie was he,
 ut it laie nat in his liberte
 here to gon, but on the morowe' he went
 oilus, whan that he for him ſent; 287
 in his herte he couldè well devine
 Troilus all night for ſorowe woke,
 hat he wouldè tell him of this pine;
 newe he well inough withoutin boke;
 hich to chambir ſtreight the way he toke,
 Troilus tho ſobirly he grette,
 n the bedde full ſone he gan him ſette. 294

So shouldst thou endure, and lettin slide
 The time, and fonde to ben glad and light;
 'Tenne dayis n'is not so long to abide;
 And sens she to comin the hath beight
 She n'll her heft brekin for any wight,
 For drede the nat that she n'll finde a waie
 To come ayen, my life that durst I laie. 357

Thy swevines eke, and all soche fantasie,
 Drive out, and let 'hem farin to mischance,
 For thei procede of thy melancolie,
 That doeth the sele in slepe all this penance:
 A strawe for all swevnis signifaunce!
 God helpe me so! I coumpt 'hem not a bene;
 'There wot no man aright what dremis mone. 364

For prestis of the temple tellin this,
 That dremis ben the revelacions
 Of goddis, and als well thei tell iwis
 That thei ben infernalle illusions,
 And lechiis saine that of complections
 Procedin thei, of fast or glotonie:
 Who wot in sothe thus what thei signifie? 371

Eke othir sain that through impressiõs,
 As if a wight hath fall a thing in minde,
 That thereof comith soche avisiõs;
 And othir sain, as thei in bokis finde,
 That astir timis of the yere by kinde
 Men dreme, and that th' effect goth by the mone:
 But leve no dreme, for it is nat to doen. 378

Well worth of dremis aie these oldè wives;
And truly eke augurie of these foulis,
For fere of which men wenin lese ther lives,
As ravin's qualm, or schriching of these oulis,
To trowin on it bothè false and foule is:
Alas! alas! that so noble' a creture
As is a man should dredin soche ordure! 385

For whiche with all mine hert I the beseeche
Unto thy self that all this thou foryeve;
And rise now up, withoutin more speche,
And let us cast how forth maie best be drive
The time, and eke how freshly we maie live
Whan she comith, the which shall be right sone;
God helpe me so the best is thus to doen. 392

Rise, let us speke of lustie life in Troie
That we have lad, and forth the timè drive,
And eke of timè coming us rejoie,
That bringin shall our blisse now so blive,
And langour of these twisè dayis five
We shall therwith so foryet or oppresse
That well unneth it doen shall us dresse. 399

This tounè is full of lordis all about,
And truis lastith all this mene while;
Go we playin us in some lustie rout,
To Sarpedon, not hennis but a mile,
And thus thou shalt the timè well begile,
And drive it forth unto that blisfull morowe
That thou her se that cause is of thy sorowe. 406

Now rise, my derè brothir Troilus!
 For certis it non honour is to the
 'To wepe, and in thy bedde to roukin thus,
 For truly of o thing trust to me,
 If thou thus ligge'st a daie, or two, or thre;
 'The folke wol wene that thou for cowardise
 'The fainist sick, and that thou darst not rise. 413

This Troilus answerde, O brothir dere!
 This knowin folke that have suffrid pain,
 That though he wepe and make sorowfull chere
 That felith harme and smerte in every vain
 No wondir is; and though I evir plain
 Or alwaie wepe I am nothing to blame,
 Sens I have lost the cause of al my game. 420

But sithins of fine force I mote arise
 I shall arise as soon as er I maie,
 And God, to whom mine herte I sacrifice,
 So sende us hastily the tennith daie,
 For was there never foule so faine of Maie
 As I shall ben when she comith in Troie
 That cause is of my tourment and my joie. 427

But whidir is thy rede, (quod Troilus)
 That we maie plaie us best in all in this toun?
 By God my counsaile is (quod Pandarus)
 'To ride and plaie us with King Sarpedoun.
 So long of this thei spekin up and down
 Till Troilus gan at the last assent
 'To rise, and forth to Sarpedon thei went. 434

This Sarpedon, as he that honourable
Was all his live, and full of hie prowesse,
With all that might iservid ben on table
That deinte was, all coste it grete richesse,
He fedde 'hem daie by daie, that soche nobleffe,
As saidin bothe the moste and eke the lest,
Was nere er that daie wiste at any fest : 441

Nor in this worlde there is none instrument
Delicious through winde or touch on corde,
As ferre as any wight hath er iwent,
That tonge tell or herte maie recorde
But at that fest it was well herd acorde,
Ne' of ladies eke so faire a companie
On daunce er tho was never sene with eye. 448

But what availith this to Troilus,
That for his sorowe nothing of it rought,
But evir in one his herte pitous
Full busily Creseide his ladie fought?
On her was evir all that his herte thought,
Now this now that so fast imagining
That gladin iwis can him no festing. 455

These ladies eke that at this feste bene,
Sens that he sawe his ladie was awaie,
It was his sorowe on 'heim for to sene,
Or for to here on instrumentis plaie;
For she that of his hert berith the kaie
Was absent, lo! this was his fantasie,
That no wight shoulde makin melodie : 462

Nor there n'as hour in all the daie or night,
 Whan he was there as no man might him here,
 That he ne saied, O lovesome ladie bright!
 How have ye farin sins that ye were there?
 Welcome iwis, mine ownè ladie dere!
 But welawaie! all this n'as but a mase;
 Fortune his love entendid but to glase. 469

The lettirs eke that she of oldè time
 Had him isent he would alone irede
 An hundrid sithe atwixtin none and prime,
 Refiguring her shape and womanhede
 Within his hert, and every worde and dede
 That passid was; and thus he drove to' an ende
 The ferthè day, and thennis wolde he wende; 476

And saide, Leve brothir Pandarus!
 Intendist thou that we shall here byleve
 Til Sarpedon wol forth conveyin us?
 Yet were it fairir that we toke our leve;
 For Godd'is love let us now sone at eve
 Our levè take, and homwarde let us tourne,
 For trewely I n'il nat thus sojourne. 483

Pandare answerid, Be we comin hither
 To fetchin fire and rennin home again?
 God helpe me so I can nat tellin whither
 We mightin gone, if I shal sothly faine;
 There any wight is of us more faine
 Than Sarpedon; and if we hennis hie
 Thus sodainly I holde it vilanie; 490

Sith that we seydin we wouldin byleve
 With him a weke, and now thus sodainly
 The ferthè day to take of him our leve,
 He wouldè wondrin on it trewely :
 Let us holde forth our purpose fermely,
 And sens that ye behightin him to' abide
 Holde forwarder now, and astir let us ride.

497

This Pandarus with mochil pine and wo
 Made him to dwel ; god at the wek'is ende
 Of Sarpedon thei toke ther leve to go,
 And on ther way they spedin 'hem to wende.
 (Quod Troilus) Now, Lorde, me gracè sende
 That I maie findin at mine home-comming
 Creseide comin, and therwith gan he sing.

504

Ye halif wodè thought ywis Pandare,
 And to him selfe ful softly he seide,
 God wote refroidin may this hottè fare
 Er Calcas sendè Troilus Creseide :
 But nathèlesse he japid thus, and seide,
 And swore iwis, his hert him wel behight
 She wouldin come as sone as er she might.

511

Whan thei unto the paleis were icomen
 Of Troilus thei doun of horse alight,
 And to the chambre ther waie have thei nommen,
 And unto timè that it gan to night
 Thei spekin of Creseide the lady bright,
 And astir this, whan that 'hem bothe leste,
 Thei spede 'hem fro the suppir unto rest.

518

On morow' as sone as day began to clere
This Troilus gan of his slepe to' abride,
And to Pandarus his owne brothir dere,
For love of God, ful pitously he seide,
As go we sene the paleis of Creseide,
For sene we yet maie have none othir left
So let us sene her paleis at the left !

525

And therwithall his meine for to blende
A cause he sende into the town to go,
And to Creseid'is paleis thei gan wende;
But Lorde! this sely Troilus was wo,
Him thought his sorowful hert braut atwo,
For when he saw her doris sperrid all
Wel nigh for sorow' adoun he gan to fall.

534

Therwith when he was ware, and gan behold
How shet was every window of the place,
As frost him thought his hert began to cold,
For whiche with chaungid dedly palè face
Withoutin worde he forth by gan to pace,
And as God would he gan so fast to ride
That no wight of his countinaunce aspid.

539

Than saide he thus; O paleis desolate!
O house of housis whilom best ydight!
O paleis empty and disconsolate!
O thou lanterne, of which queint is the light!
O paleis whilom day, that now art night!
Wel oughtist thou to fal and I to die
Sene she is went that wont was us to gie.

546

O paleis whilom croune of housis al!
 Enluminid with sunne of allè blisse,
 O ring, of whiche the rubie is out fall!
 O cause of wo that cause hast ben of blisse!
 Yet sens I may no bet faine would I kisse
 Thy coldè doris, durst I for this route;
 And farwel shrine of whiche the saint is out! 553

Therwith he cast on Pandarus his eie
 With chaungid face, and pitous to beholde,
 And whan he might his time aright asprie
 Aie as he rode to Pandarus he tolde
 His newe sorow, and eke his joyis olde,
 So pitously, and with so ded an hawe,
 That every wight might on his sorow rewe. 560

Fro thinnis forth he ridith up and doune,
 And every thing came him to remembraunce
 As he rode forth by placis of the tounne
 In whiche he whilom had all his plesaunce;
 Lo! yondir saw I mine owne lady daunce,
 And in that temple with her eyin clere.
 Me captive caught first my right lady dere: 567

And yondir have I herde ful lustily
 My dere hert Crescide laugh, and yondir plaie
 Sawe I her onis eke ful blisfully,
 And yondir onis to me gan she saie,
 Now, gode swete! lovith me wel I you praye;
 And yonde so godely gan she me beholde
 That to the deth mine hert is to her holde: ... 574

And up
And to l
Fro her
As wo
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place
;81
Lorde Cupide!
y fide
e a storie;
victorie
thy will?
ne folke to spill?
roke on me thine ire,
edful for to greve;
woft wel I desire
n this leue,
n thy beleve,
a guerdon but a bonte,
en me sende sone.
as fast to retourne
to longin her to se,
at she n'il nat sojourne:
l so cruil thou ne bee
Troie, I praie the,
to the blode Thebane,
folke of Thebis caught ther bane.

602

And aftir this he to the yatis wente.
 Ther as Creseide out rode a full gode pass,
 And up and down there made he many' a wente,
 And to him selfe ful oft he said, Alas!
 Fro hennis rode my blisse and my solas:
 As woulde blisful God now for his joie
 I might her sene ayen comin to Troie!

60

And to the yondir hil I gan her gide,
 Alas! and there I toke of her my love,
 And yonde I sawe her to her fathir ride,
 For sorow of whiche mine hert shal to cleve,
 And hithir home I came whan it was eve,
 And here I dwel, out cast from allè jole,
 And shal, til I maie sene her este in Troie.

61

And of him selfe imaginid he ofte
 To ben defaitid, pale, and woxin lesse
 Than he was wonte, and that men saidin softe
 What may it be? who can the sothè geffe
 Why Troilus hath al this hevinesse?
 And al this n'as but his melancolie,
 That he had of him selfe suche fantasie.

62

Another time imaginin he would
 That evèry wight that went by the way
 Had of him routhe, and that thei faine should
 I am right sory Troilus wol dey:
 And thus he drove a daie yet forth or twey,
 As ye have herde: suche life gan he to lede
 As he that stode betwixin hope and drede:

63

For which him likid in his songis shewe

Th' encheſon of his wo as he beſt might,
And made a ſonge of wordis but a fewe,
Somewhat his wofull hertè for to light,
And whan he was from every man's ſight
With ſoftè voice he of his lady dere,
(That abſent was, gan ſing as ye maie here: 637

O ſterre! of whiche I loſt have all the light,
With hertè ſore wel ought I to bewaile
That evir derke in turment, night by night,
Towarde my deth with winde I ſtere and faile,
For whiche the tennith night if that I faile
The giding of thy bemis bright an houre
My ſhip and me Carybdis woll devoure: 644

This ſongè when he thus ſongin had ſone
He fil aien into his ſighis olde,
And evèry night, as was his wont to done,
He ſtodè the bright monè to beholde,
And al his ſorowe he to the mone tolde,
And ſaid, I wiſ whan thou art hornid newe
I ſhal be glad if al the world be trewe: 651

I ſaw thine hornis olde eke by that morow
Whan hennis rode my bright lady dere,
That cauſe is of my turment and my ſorow,
For whiche, o bright Lucina the clere
For love of God ren ſaſt about thy ſphere,
For whan thine hornis newe giſſis to ſpring
Than ſhal ſhe come that maie my bliſſe bring: 6

daie is more and lengir every night
 thei ben wont to be, him thoughtè tho,
 that the funnè went his course unright
 lengir waie than it was wouste to go,
 and said, I wis I drede me evirmo.
 The sunn'is sonne Phaeton be on live,
 And that his fathir's carre amisse he drive. 665
 Upon the wallis fast eke would he walke,
 And on the Grekis host he would yfe,
 And to him selfe right thus he would ytalke;
 Lo! yondir is mine ownè lady fre,
 Or ellis yondir there the tentis be,
 And thence comith this ayre that is so sote,
 That in my foule I fele it doth me bote. 674
 And hardily this winde that more and more
 Thus stoundemele encrefith in my face
 Is of my ladies depè fighis fore;
 I preve it thus, for in none othir space
 Of al this toun, save onely in this place,
 Fele I no winde that founith so like paine,
 It saith Alas! why twinid be we twaine? 679
 This longè time he drivith forth right thus,
 Til fully passid was the ninthè night,
 And aie beside him was this Pandarus,
 That befily did allè his full might,
 Him to comfort and make his hertè light,
 Yeven him hope alway the tenthè morow
 That she shal comen and stintin al his sorow. 686

Upon that othir side eke was Creseide
 With women fewe among the Grekis strong,
 For whiche ful oft a day Alas! she seide,
 That I was borne: wel maie mine hertè long
 Astir my deth, for now live I to long;
 Alas! and I ne may it not amende,
 For now is worse than evir yet I wende. 693

My father n'il for nothing do me grace
 To gone ayen for ought I can him queme;
 And if so be that I my termè pace
 My Troilus, alas! shal in his hert deme
 That I am false, and so it maie wol seme;
 Thus shal I have unthénke on every side:
 That I was borne to welsaway the tide! 700

And if that I me put in jeopardie
 To stele awaie by night, and it befall
 That I be caught I shal be helde a spie,
 Or ellis, lo! this drede I most of al,
 If in the hondis of some wretche I fall
 I n'am but lost, al be mine hertè trewe:
 Now mighty God thou on my sorow rewe! 707

Ful pale iwoxin was her brightè face,
 Her limmis lene, as she that at the daie
 Stode whan she durst, and lokid on the place
 There she was borne, and she had dwellid aye;
 And al the night weping, alas! she laie
 And thus dispeirid out of allè cure
 She lad her life this sorowfull creature. 711

Ful oft a daie she sighed eke for distresse,
And in her selfe she went aie purtraying
Of Troilus the gretè worthinesse,
And al his godely wordis recording
Sens first that daie her love began to spring;
And thus she sette her wofull hert afire
Through remembraunce of that she gan desire. 720

In all this world there n'is so cruil hert
That her had herd complainin in her sorow
That n'old have wepin for her painis smert;
So tendirly she wept both eve and morow
Her nedid not no teres for to borow;
And this was yet the worst of all her paine,
Ther was no wight to whom she durst complaine. 728

Ful rewfully she lokid upon Troie,
Behelde the touris high and eke the hallis;
Alas! (quod she) the plesaunce and the joie,
The whiche that now al turnid into gal is,
Have I had oftin within yondir wallis!
O Troilus! what doest thou now? she seide;
Lord, whethir thou yet think upon Creseide! 735

Alas! that I ne' had trowid on your lore,
And went with you, as ye me redde er this,
Than had I now not sighid halfe so sore:
Who might have said that I had don amis
To stele awaie with suche one as he is?
But al to late comith the lectuarie
Whan men the corse unto the grave carie. 742

To late is now to speke of that matere;
Prudence, alas! one of thine eyin thre
Me lackid alway er that I came here,
For on time passid wel remembrid me,
And present time eke coulde I wel yse,
But future time, er I was in the snare,
Could I not sene, that causith now my care.

But nathèlesse, betide what may betide,
I shal to morow' at night, by est or west,
Out of this hoste stele on some manir side,
And gon with Troilus where as him lest;
This purpose wol I holde, and this is best;
No force of wickid tongis jonglerie,
Nor er on love have wretchis had envie :

For who so wol of every worde take hede,
Or rulin him by every wight'is wit,
Ne shal he nevir thrivin out of drede,
For that that some men blamin ever yet
Lo othir manir folke commendin it;
And as for me, for al suche variaunce
Felicite clepe I my suffisaunce.

For whiche, withoutin any wordis mo,
To Troie I wol, as for conclusioun.
But God it wote er fully monthis two
She was ful ferre fro that entencioun,
For bothè Troilus and Troiè toun.
Shall knotèlesse throughout her hertè slide,
For she wol take a purpose for to' abide.

This Diomede of whom I you tel gan,
 Goth now within himselfe aie arguing,
 With al the sleight and al that er he can,
 How he maie best with shortist taryng
 Into his nette Creseid'is hertè bring;
 To this entent he couthè nevir fine;
 To fishin her he laide out hoke and line.

777

But nathèlesse wel in his hert he thought
 That she n'as nat without a love in Troie,
 For nevir sithin he her thennis brought
 Ne couthe he sene her laugh or makin joie;
 He n'ist how best her hert for to acoie,
 But for t'assay he said nought it ne greveth,
 For *He that naught assayith naught atcheveth.*

784

Yet said he to him selfe upon a night,
 Now am I nat a fole that wote wel howe
 Her woe is for love of anothir wight
 And herupon to gon assaie her nowe?
 I maie well wete it n'il nat ben my prowé,
 For wisè folke in bokis it expresse,
Men shal nat worwe a wight in bevineffe.

791

But who so might ywinnin suche a flouré
 Fro him for whom she mournith night and daie
 He might wel saine he were a conqueroure;
 And right anone, as he that bold was aie,
 Thought in his hert, happin what happin may,
 Al should I die I wol her hertè seche,
 I shal no more lesin but my speche.

798

This Diomedes, as bookis us declare,
 Was in his nedis prest and corageous,
 With sternè voice, and mighty limmis square,
 Hardy and testife, strong and chevalrous,
 Of dedis like his fathir Tydèus;
 And some men saine he was of tongè large,
 And heire he was of Calydon and Arge. 805

Creseidè mene ywas of her stature,
 Therto of shape, of face, and eke of chere,
 There ne mightin ben no fairir cature;
 And oftin timis this was her manere
 To gone itressid with her heris clere
 Doune by her colere, at her backe behinde,
 Which with a threde of gold she woulde binde. 812

And save her browis joynedin isere
 There n'as no lacke in aught I can espie;
 But for to spekin of her eyin clere,
 Lo! truily thei writtin that her leien
 That paradis fode formid in her cien,
 And with her richè beaute evirmore
 Strove love in her aie which of 'hem was more. 819

She sobre was, simple, and wise withall,
 The best inorishid eke that might be,
 And godely of her speche in generall,
 Charitable, estately, lusty, and fre,

Ne nevirmore ne lackid her pitte,
 Tendrehertid, and sliding of corage,
 But truily I can nat tel her age. 826

And Troilus wel woxin was in hight,
And complete, formid by proporcioun
So wel, that Kinde it naught amending might,
Yong, fresh, and strong, and hardy as lioun,
And trewe as stele in eche condicioun,
One of the best entetchid creature
That is or shal while that the world maie dure. 833

And certainly in story it is fonde
That Troilus was nevir to no wight,
As in his time, in no degre seconde
In daring do that longith to a knight;
Al might a giaunt passin him of might
His hert aie with the first and with the best
Stode peregall to dare done what him left. 840

But for to tellin forthe of Diomedes
It fil, that aftir on the tennith daie
Sens that Creseide out of the cite yede
This Diomedes, as fresh as braunche in Maie,
Came to the tentè there as Calchas laie,
And fainid him with Calchas have to done,
But what he mente I shal you tellin sone. 847

Creseidè, at shorte wordis for to tel,
Welcomid him, and doun him by her sette,
And he was ethe inough to makin dwel;
And aftir this, withoutin longè lette,
The spicis and the wine men forth 'hem sette,
And forthe thei speke of this and that ifere,
As frendis done, of whiche some shal ye here. 854

He gan first fallin of the warre in speche
Betwixin them and the folke of Troie town,
And of th' assiege he gan eke her besече
To tellin him what was her opinioun;
Fro that demaunde he so discendith down
To askin her if that her straunge thought
The Grekis gife and werkis that thei wrought

And why her fathir taryith so long
To weddin her unto some worthy wight?
Creseide, that was in her painis strong
For love of Troilus her owne knight,
So ferforth as she conning had or might
Answerde him tho, but as of his entente
It semid that she ne wist what he mente.

But nathelless this ilke Diomede
Gan on him selfe assure, and thus he seide;
If I aright have takin on you hede
Me thinkith thus, o lady mine Creseide!
That sene I first hond on your bridil leide,
When I out came of Troie by the morow,
Ne might I nevir sene you but in sorow.

I can nat saine what maie the cause be,
But if for love of some Trojan it were,
The whiche right sore wouldin athinkin me,
That ye for any wight that dwellith there
Shuldin yspil a quartir of a tere,
Or pitously your selvin so begile,
For dredelless it is nat worthe the while.

The folke of Troie, as who faith al and some,
 Prison ben, as ye your selvin se,
 So thennis shal nat one on liue come
 For al the golde atwixin sunne and se;
 Trustith wel this, and understondith me,
 There shal nat one to mercy gone on liue,
 Al were he lord of worldis twise five. 889

Such wrech on them for fetching of Heleine
 There shal be take, er that we hennis wende,
 That Manes, whiche that goddis ben of Peine,
 Shal ben agast that Grekis wol 'hem shende;
 And men shal drede unto the world's ende
 From hennis forthe to ravishe any quene,
 So cruil shal our wreche on them be sene. 896

And but if Calchas led us with *ambages*,
 That is to saine, with double wordis flie,
 Suche as men clepen a word with two visages,
 Ye shal wel knowin that I do nat lie,
 And al this thing right sene it with your eie,
 And that anon, ye n'il nat trowe how sone;
 Now takith hede, for it is for to done. 903

What! wenin ye that your wife fathir would
 Have yevin Antenor for you anon
 If he ne wiste that the cite should
 Dstroyid ben? Why, nay: so mote I gone
 He knew ful wel there shal nat scapin one
 That Trojan is, and for the gretè fere
 He durst nat that ye dwellid lengir there. 910

. What wol ye more, o lovesome lady dere!
 I et Troie and Trojans fro your hertè passe;
 Drive out the bittir hope, and make gode chere,
 And clepe ayen the beaute of your face,
 That ye with saltè teris so deface,
 For Troie is brought in suche a jeopardie
 That it to save is now no remedie. 917

And thinkith wel ye that in Grekis finde
 A love more parfite, er that it be night,
 Than any Trojan is, and more kinde,
 And bet to servin you wol don his might;
 And if that ye vouchsafe, my lady bright!
 I wol ben he to servin you my selve,
 Ye, levir than be lorde of Grecis twelve. 924

And with that word he gan to waxin red,
 And in his speche a litil while he quoke,
 And cast aside a litil with his hed,
 And stinte a while, and aftirwarde he woke,
 And sobrelly on her he threwe his loke,
 And said, I am, al be' it to you no joie,
 As gentle a man as any wight in Troie:

For if my fathir Tydeus, he seide,
 Ilivid had, tho I had ben er this
 Of Calidony' and Arge a king, Creseide,
 And so hope I that I shal yet iwis,
 But he was slaine, alas! the more harm is,
 Unhappily at Thebis al to rathe,
 Polynices and many a man to scathe.

But, hertè mine! sithe that I am your man,
 And ye ben the first of whom I seche grace,
 To servin you as hertely as I can,
 And evir shal while I to live have space,
 So that er I depart out of this place
 Ye wol me grauntin that I maie to morow
 At bettir laisir tel you of my sorow. 945

What should I tell his wordis that he seide?
 He spake inough for o daie at the mest;
 It previth wel he spake so that Creseide
 Grauntid on the morow at his request
 Forthy to spekin with him at the leste,
 So that he n'olde spekin of sache matere,
 And thus she to him said, as ye mowe here, 952

As she that had her hert on Troilus
 So fast yset that none might it arace,
 And straungely she spake, and seidè thus:
 O Diomedè! I love that ilkè place
 There I was borne, and Jovis of thy grace
 Delivre' it sone of al that doth it care:
 God for thy might so leve it wel to fare! 959

That Grekis wold ther wrath on Troyè wreke,
 If that thei might, I know it wel iwis;
 But it shal naught befallin as ye speke,
 And God toforne; and farthir ovir this
 I wote, my fathir wife and redy is,
 And that he me hath bought, as ye me tolde,
 So dere I am to him the more yholde. 966

That Grekis ben of high condicioun

I wote eke well, but certaine men shall finde

As worthy folkẽ within Troiẽ toun,

As conning, as parfite, and eke as kinde,

As ben betwixtin Orcades and Inde;

And that ye couldin wel your lady serve

I trowe eke wel, ber thonke for to deserve.

973

But as to speke of love, iwis, she seide,

I had a lorde to whom I weddid was,

The whose mine hert was al til that he deide,

And othir love, as helpe me now Pallas,

There in mine hert ne is ne nevir was;

And that ye ben of noble' and high kinrede

I have wel herde it tellin out of drede.

980

And that doth me to have so gret a wonder

That ye wol scornin any woman so;

Eke God wote love and I ben fer asonder;

I am disposid bet, so mote I go,

Unto my deth to plaine and makin wo:

What I shal aftir done I can nat saie;

But truily as yet me liste nat plaie.

987

Mine hert is now in tribulacioun,

And ye in armis besy daie by daie;

Hereaftir when ye wonnin have the toun

Paravintur than so it happin maye

That whan I se that I nevir ere saie

Than wol I werke that I nevir ere wrought;

This word to you inough sufficin eght.

99

To morow eke wol I speke with you faine,
 So that ye touchin nought of this matere,
 And whan you list ye maie come here againe;
 And er ye gon thus muche I saie you here,
 As helpe me Pallas with her heris clere,
 Yf that I should of any Greke have routhe
 It should ybe your selvin by my trouthe. 1001

I saie nat therfore that I wol you love,
 Ne saie nat naie, but, in conclusioun,
 I menè wel, by God that sit above;
 And therwithal she cast her eyin down,
 And gan to sigh, and saide, O Froyè tounè!
 Yet bidde I God in quiet and in rest
 I maie the sene, or do mine hertè brest. 1008

But in effeete, and shortely for to saie,
 This Diomede al freshly newe againe
 Gan preasin on, and fast her mercy praie;
 And aftir this, the sothè for to saie,
 Her glove he toke, of which he was ful faine,
 And, finally, whan it was woxin eve,
 And al was wel, he rose and toke his leve. 1015

The bright Venus folowid and aie taught
 The waie there brodè Phæbus dounè alight,
 And Cytherea her chare-horse o'r raught
 To whirle into the Lioun if she might,
 And Signifer his candils shewith bright,
 Whan that Creseidè unto her bed wente
 Within her fathir's faire brightè teate, 1022

Retourning in new
 The wordis of this sodaine Drow-
 His gret estate, and peril of the toun,
 And that she was alone, and haddè nede
 Of frendis helpe, and thus began to drede
 The causis why, the sothè for to tell,
 That she toke fully purpose for to dwell
 The morow came, and, gostly for to spe'
 This Diomede is come unto Creseide;
 And, shortly, lest that ye my talè breke,
 So wel he for himselfin spake and seide
 That al her sighis fore adoun he leide;
 And, finally, the sothè for to saine,
 He rest her of the grete of alle her pain
 And astir this the story telleth us
 That she unto him yave the faire ba'
 The whiche she onis wan of Troilus
 And eke a broche (and that was liv'
 That Troilus was she yave this Di-
 And eke the bet from sorowe' hi
 She made him were a pencell of
 I finde eke in the story ellis
 Whan through the body hurt
 Of Troilus tho wepte she mar
 Whan that she saw his wide
 And that she toke to kepin'
 And for to helin him of his
 Men saine, I n'ot, that sh

But truly the story tellith us
 There madin nevir woman more wo
 Than she whan that she falsid Troilus;
 She saide Alas! for now is clene ago
 My name in trouthe of love for evir mo,
 For I have falsid one the gentillest
 That ever was, and one the worthiest. 1057

Alas! of me unto the world's ende
 Shall neithir ben iwrittin or ifong
 No gode worde, for these bokis woll me shende;
 Irollid shall I ben on many'a tong,
 Throughout the world my bell shall be yrong,
 And women mooste woll hatin me of all;
 Alas, that soche a caas me should befall! 1064

Thei woll fain, in as moche as in me is
 I have 'hem doon dishonour, welawaie!
 All be I not the first that did amis,
 What helpith that to doen my blame awaie?
 But fens I se there is no bettir waie,
 And that to late is now for me to rue,
 To Diomedes I woll algate be true. 1071

But, Troilus, fens I no bettir maie,
 And fens that thus departin ye and I,
 Yet praie I God so yeve you right gode daie,
 As for the gentillist knight truly
 That er I sawe to servin faithfully,
 And best can aie his ladie's honour kepe,
 (And with that worde she braut anon to wepe) 1078

And certis you. ne hatin shall I never,
 And frend'is love that shall ye have of me,
 And my gode worde, all should I livin ever;
 And truily I would right forie be
 For to fein you in adversite;
 And gultileffe I wot well I you leve;
 And all shall passe, and thus take I my leve. 1

But truily how long it was bitwene
 That she forfoke him for this Diomede
 There is none auðhour tellith it I wene,
 Take every man now to his bokis hede
 He shall no terme findin out of drede,
 For though that he began to wowe her sone,
 Er he ber wan yet was there more to done. 1

Ne me ne list this felie woman chide
 Ferthir than that the storie woll devise;

Her name, alas! is publihid so wide
 That for her gilt it ought inough fuffise;
 And if I might excuse her in some wise,
 For she so forie was for her untrouthe,
 Iwis I would excuse her yet for routhe. 1

This Troilus, as I before have told,
 Thus drivith forth as wel as he hath might,
 But oftin was his hertè hote and cold,
 And namily that ilkè ninthe night
 Whiche on the morowe she had him behight
 To come ayen; God wote full little rest
 Had he that night; nothing to slepe him left. 1

The laurir-crownid Phœbus with his hete
Gan in his course aie upward as he went
To warme of the est se the wavis wete,
And Circe's doughtir song with freslie entent,
Whan Troilus his Pandare aftir sent,
And on the wallis of the toune thei pleide,
To loke if thei can sene aught of Creseide; 1143

Till it was none thei stodin for to se
Who that there came, and every manir wight
That came fro ferre thei saidin it was she,
Till that thei couldin knowin him aright:
Now was his hertè dull, now was it light;
And thus bejapid stodin for to stare
'About naught this Troilus and Pandare. 1120

To Pandarus this Troilus tho seide;
For aught I wot before none fikirly
Into this toune ne comith not Creseide,
She hath inough to doin hardily
To twinnin from her fathir, so trowe I;
Her oldè fathir woll yet make her dine
Er that she go; God yeve his hertè pine! 1125

Pandare answerd, It maie well ben certain,
And forthy let us dine, I the besече,
And aftir none than maist thou come again:
And home thei go withoutin morè speche,
And conin ayen; but long maie thei seche
Er that thei findin that thei aftir gape;
'Fortune 'hem bothe ythinkith for to jape. 1134

(Quod Troilus) I fe well now that she

Is taryid with her old fathir so
That er she come it woll nigh evin be;
Come forthe, I woll unto the yate go,
These portirs hen unkonning evir mo,
And I woll doen 'hem holdin up the yate
As naught ne were, although she comin late. 1141

The daie goth fast, and aftir that came eve,
And yet came nat to Troilus Creseide:
He lokith forth by hedge, by tre, by greve,
And ferre his hedde ovir the wall he leide,
And at the last he tournid him, and feide,
By God I wote her mening now, Pandare;
Almoſte iwis all newe was all my care. 1148

Now doutileſs this ladie can her gode;
I wote ſhe comith riding privily;
I commendin her wiſedome by mine hode;
She woll nat makin peple nicily
Gaure on her whan ſhe cometh, but ſoftly

By night into the toune ſhe thinkith ride,
And, dere brothir! thinke nat long to abide. 1155

We have naught ellis for to doen iwis;
And Pandarus, now wilt thou throwin me,
Have here my trouth I fe her; yond ſhe is:
Heve up thine eyin man; maieſt thou nat ſe?
Pandare answerid, Naie, ſo mote I the;
All wrong by God: what ſaiſt thou man? wher art?
That I ſe yonde aſarre n'is but a carté. 1162

Alas! thou saiest right sothe, (quod Troilus)
 But hardly it is not all for nought
 That in mine herte I now rejoicè thus;
 It is ayenst some gode: I have a thought,
 N'ot I nat how, but sons that I was wrought
 Ne felt I soche a comfort dare I saie:
 She cometh to night, my life that durst I lay. **1169**

Pandare answerde, it maie be well inough;
 And helde with him of all that er he saied,
 But in his herte he thought, and soft he lough,
 And to himself full sobirly he saied,
 From hasilwodde, there Joly Robin plaied,
 Shall come all that that thou abidist here;
 Ye, farwell all the snowe of fernè yere. **1176**

The wardein of the yatis gan to call
 The folke which that without the yatis were,
 And badde 'heim drivin in thor bestis all,
 Or all the night thei must bylevin there;
 And ferre within the night, with many' a tere,
 This Troilus gan homward for to ride,
 For well he seeth it helpith nat to' abide. **1183**

But nathèlesse he gladdid him in this,
 He thought he misacomptid had his daie,
 And saied, I understande have all amis,
 For thilkè night I last Cresseidè saie
 She saied I shall ben here, if that I maie,
 Er that the mone, o my dere hertè swete!
 The Lion passe out of this Ariete: **1190**

For whiche she maie yet hold all her beheft;
 And on the morowe to the yate he went,
 And up and doune, by west and eke by est,
 Upon the wallis made he many' a went;
 But al for naught; his hope alway him blent,
 For which at night in sorow and sighes fore
 He went him home withoutin any more. 1197

This hope all clene out of his hertè fledde,
 He ne' hath wheron now lengir for to hong,
 But for the pain him thought his hertè bledd,
 So wer his throwis sharp, and wondir strong,
 For whan he sawe that she abode so long
 He ne wist what he judgin of it might,
 Sens she hath brokin that she him behight. 1204

The thirde, the fourth, the fiste, and the sixt, daie
 Aftir tho dayis tenne of whiche I told,
 Betwixin hope and drede his hertè laie,
 Yet somwhat trusting on her hestis old;
 But whan he sawe she n'olde her termis hold
 He can now sene none othir remedie

But for to shapin him sone for to die. 1211

Therwith the wickid spirit, God us bleffe!
 Whiche that men clepin the wode Jalousie,
 Gan in him crepe in all this hevinesse,
 For whiche bicause he wouldin sonè die
 He ne' ete ne dronke for his melancolie,
 And eke from every companie he fledde;
 This was the life that all this tyme he ledde. 1218

He so defaite was that no manir man
Unnethis him might knowin there he went,
So was he lene and therto pale and wan,
And feble, that he walkith by potent,
And with his ire he thus himselfin shent ;
But whofo askid him wherof him smerte,
He saied his harme was all about his herte. 1215

Priam full oft, and eke his mothir dere,
Hir bretherne and his sustrin, gan him frain
Why he so wofull was in all his chere,
And what thing was the cause of al his pain?
But all for naught ; he n'olde his cause plain,
But saied he felt a grevous maladie
About his herte, and fain he wouldè die. 1222

So on a daie he laie him doune to slepe,
And so bifell it that in slepe him thought
That in a forest fast he walked to wepe
For love of her that him these painis wrought,
And up and doune as he that forest sought
He met he sawe a bore with tuskis grete
That slept ayenist the bright sunn'is hete ; 1239

And by this bore, fast in her armis fold,
Laie kissing aie his ladie bright Creseide,
For sorowe' of whiche, whan he it gan behold,
And for dispite, out of his slepe he breide,
And loude he cried on Pandarus, and seide,
O Pandarus ! now knowe I crop and rote
I n'am but dedde ; there n'is none othir bote. 1246

My ladie bright, Creseide, hath me betraide,
In whom I trustid moste of any wight;
She ellifwhere hath now her hert apaied;
The blisfull goddis thorough ther grcte might
Have in my dreme isshewid it full right:
Thus in my dreme Creseide have I beholde,
And all this thing to Pandarus he tolde. 1253

O my Creseide! alas! what subtilte,
What newe lust, what beaute, what science,
What wrathe of iuste cause have ye unto me?
What gilt of me, what fell experience,
Hath fro me raste, alas! thine advertence?
O trust! o faithe! quod he', o depe assuraunce!
Who hath me raste Creseide, all my plesaunce? 1260

Alas! why let I her from hennis go?
For whiche well nigh out of my wit I breide;
Who shall now trowe on any othis mo?
God wote I wende, o ladie bright Creseide!
That every worde was gospell that ye seide:
But who maie bet begile if that him list,

Than he on whom men wenin best to trift? 1267

What shall I doen, my Pandarus? alas!
I felin now so sharpe a newe pain,
Sens that there is no remedy' in this caas,
That bet were it I with mine hondis twain
My selvin slowe than alwaie thus to plain,
For through the deth my wo shuld have an ende,
There every daie with life my self I shende. 1274

Pandare answerde and said, Alas the while
 That I was borne ! Have I nat saied er this
 That dremis many'a manir man begile ?
 And why ? for folke expoundin'hem amis :
 How darst thou saine that false thy ladie is
 For any dreme ? right for thine ownè drede
 Let be this thought ; thou canst no dremis rede. 1

Paravinture there thou dremest of this bore
 It maie so be that it maie signifie
 Her fathir, whiche that old is and eke hore,
 Aven the sunne lyith on point to die,
 And she for sorowe ginnith wepe and crie,
 And kiffith him, there he lieth on the ground ;
 Thus shuldith thou thy dreme aright expound. 1

How might I than doin (quod Troilus)
 To knowe of this, yea, were nevir so lite ?
 Now saiest thou wisely, (quod this Pandarus.)
 My redy is this, sens thou canst well endite,
 That hastily a lettir thou her write,
 Thorough which thou shalt wel bringin about
 To knowe a soth of that thou art in dout. 1

And se now why ; for this I dare well saine,
 That if so is that she untrue ybe
 I can not trowe that she woll write again ;
 And if she write thou shalt full sone ise
 As whethir she hath any liberte
 To come ayin, or ellis in some clause
 If she be let she wol assigne a cause. 1

Thou hast not writtin to her sens she went,
 Nor she to the; and this I durst wele laie,
 There maie soche cause ben in her entenc
 That hardily thou wolt thy felvin saie
 That her abode the best is for you twaie:
 Now write her than, and thou shalt felè sone
 A soth of all; there is no more to done. 1309

Acordid ben to this conclusioun,
 And that anon, these ilke lordis two,
 And hastily sat Troilus adoun,
 And rollith in his hertè to and fro
 How he maie best discrivin her his wo,

And to Creseidè his owne ladie dere
 He wrote right thus, and said as ye maie here. 1316

The copie of the letter.

Right fresh flour, whose I have aye ben and shall,
 Withoutin part of ellifwhere servise,
 With herte and bodie, life, lust, thought, and all,
 I wofull wight, in every humble wise
 That tong can tell or hertè maie devise,
 As oft as mattir occupyth place,
 Me recommaunde unto your noble grace. 1323

Likith it you to wetin, swetè herte!
 As ye well knowin, how long time agen
 That ye me left in aspre painis smerte,
 Whan that ye wentin, of whiche yet bote non
 Have I non had, but evir worse bigon
 Fro daie to daie am I, and so mote dwell
 While it you list, of wele and wo my well. 1330

For whiche to you with dredefull hertè true
I write, as he that sorowe driveth to write,
My wo, that every houre encrefith newe,
Complaining as I dare or can endite ;
And that defacid is that maie ye wite
The teris which that from mine eyin rain,
That wuldin speke if that thei durst and plain. 1337

You first besече I that your eyin clere
To loke on this defoulid ye nat hold,
And ore all this that ye my ladie dere
Woll vouchsafin this lettir to beheld,
And by the cause eke of my caris cold,
That slaeth my wit, if aught amis me sterre
Foryevith it me, mine owne swetè herte! 1344

If any servaunt durst or ought of right
Upon his ladie pitouffly complain,
Than wene I that I ought to be that wight,
Confidrid this, that ye thefe monthis twain
Have taried there ye faidin, sothe to fain,
But tenne dayis ye n'olde in hoste sojourne,
But in two monethis yet ye not retourne. 1351

But for as moche as me mote nedis like
All that you list I dare nat planin more,
But humbly with sorowfull sighis like
You write I mine unrestie sorowes fore,
Fro daie to daie desiring evirmore
To knowin fully, if your will it were,
How ye have fared and don while ye be there; 1358

AND CRESEIDE.

and hele eke God encrese
at upward in degre
that it nevir cese;
te aie can, my ladie fre,
o God so mote it be,
that ye sone upon me rewe,
all I' am to you true.

1365

likith knowin of the fare
e wo there maie no wight discriue,
ore, but chest of every care,
g of this lettir I' am on live,
out my wofull ghost to drive,
I delaie and holde him yet in honde
he sight of martir of your sonde.

1372

he cyin two, in vain with whiche I fe,
rowfull teres salt-arn woxin wellis,
song in plaint of mine aduersite,
y gode in harme, mine ese eke woxin helis,
y joie in wo: I can sey now nought ellis
out tournid is, for whiche my life I warie,

1379

Every joie or ese in his contrarie:
Which with your coming home ayen to Troy
Ye maie redresse, and more a thousande fische

Than er I had encressin in me joie,
For was there, nevir herte yet so blithe
To have his life as I shall ben as swithe
As I you se, and though no manir routhe
Can mevin you, yet thinkith on your trouthe.

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And if so be my gilt hath deth deserved,
Or if you list no more upon me se,
In guerdon yet of that I have you served
Beseeche I you, mine ownè ladie fre,
That hereupon you wouldin write to me
For love of Jovis, my right lodè sterre,
That deth maie make an ende of al my werre. 1393

If othir cause aught doeth you for to dwell,
That with your lettir ye me recomfort,
For though to me your absēce is an hell,
With pacience I woll my wo comfort.
And with your lettre' of hope I woll disport:
Now writith, swete! and let me thus nat plain;
With hope or deth deliverith me fro pain. 1400

Iwis, mine ownè derè hertè true!
I wote that whan ye next upon me se,
So lost have I mine hele and eke mine hewe,
Cresēidè shall not conne tho knowin me;
Iwis, mine hert'is daie, my ladie fre!
So thurstith aie mine hertè to behold
Your beaute that unnèth my life I hold. 1407

I saie no more, all have I for to sey
To you well more than that I tellin maie;
But whethir that ye doe me live or dey
Yet praie I God so yeve you right gode daie:
And farith well, thou godely faire freshe Maie!
As ye that life or deth me maie commaunde,
And to your trouth aie I me recommaunde, 1414

With helè foche, that but ye ye vin me
 The famin hele I shall non hele yhave:
 In you lieth, whan you list that it so be,
 The daie in whiche me clothin shall my grave,
 And in you my life, in you might to save
 Me fro difese of all my painis fmerite:
 And farith now wele, myne own dere swete her

Le wofte

This lettir forthe was sent unto Creseide,
 Of whiche her answere in effect was this;
 Full pitoufly she wrote ayen, and seide,
 That all so sonè as she might iwis
 She would come, and amende that was amis;
 And, finally, she wrote and sayid then
 She would ycome, ye, but she n'ist not when.

But in her lettir madin she foche festes
 That wondir was, and swore she loved him best,
 Of whiche he found but botomles bihestes.
 But, Troilus, thou maiest now est and west
 Pipe in an ivie lese if that the lest:
 Thus goth the world; God shild us fro mischaunce
 And every wight that menith trouth avaunce!

Encrefin gan the wo fro daie to night
 Of Troilus for tarying of Creseide,
 And lessin gan his hope and eke his might,
 For whiche al down he in his bedde him leide;
 He ne ete, dronke, ne slept, ne wordè seide,
 Imagining aie that she was unkinde,
 For which well nigh he wext out of his mind

This dreame of which I told haue eke before
 Maie nevir come out of his remembraunce;
 He thought aie well he had his ladie loyn,
 And that Jovis of his hie purveiaunce;
 Him shewed had in slepe the signification
 Of her untrouth and his disavinture,
 And that the bore was shewed him in figure; 1449

For whiche he for Sibylle his sustir sent,
 That callid was Cassandre' eke all about,
 And all his dreame he told her as he sent,
 And her befought assoilin him the doubt
 Of the strong bore with all his turkis stout;
 And, finally, within a litil stounde
 Cassandra him gan thus his dreame expounde. 1456

She gan first smile, and said, O brother dere!
 If thou a sothe of this desirest to knowe
 Thou must a fewe of olde stories here,
 To purpose how that Fortune overthrowe
 Hath lordis old, through which within a throw
 Thou shalt this bore well know, and of what kinde
 He comin is, as men in bokis finde. 1463

Diana, whiche that wrothe was and in ire,
 Grekis n'olde doin her sacrifice,
 Incens on her altar set on fire,
 For that Grekis gon her so dispise
 To take her in a wondir cruill wife,
 With a bore as grete as oxe in stall
 Made up frete ther corne and vinis alle. 1470

was all the countre reifed,
 ere came this bore to se
 worlde the best ipraised;
 le of that countre,
 hē maidin fre,
 uode er he wouldē stent
 , and her the hed he sent. 1477
 le bokis tellin us,
 e and a grete envie;
 fendid Tydeus
 le bokis lie;
 ger gan to die,
 ir, woll I you not tell,
 rin for to dwell. 1484
 v Tydeus, er she stent,
 e of Thebes
 (ome of the cite) went
 Polynices,
 thir Dan Eteocles
 Thebis held the strength;
 rocesse all by length. 1491
 Hemonides afterte
 gh'fistic knights floute;
 ie propheties by herte;
 a kingis with ther rout
 all aboute,
 rpent, and the welk,
 all, she gan him tell. 1498

*Associat profugus Tydeus primo Polynicem,
Tydea legatum docet, insidiasque secundus.
Tertius Hemeniden canit, & vatem latitantem,
Quartus habet Reges inuenter preliis septem,
Lemniadem Furio quinto narratur, & anguis,
Archemori bustum sexto, ludique leguntur,
Dat Thebis vatem Graiorum septimus umbris,
Octavo cecidit Tydeus, spes, vita Polydum;
Hippomedon nono moritur cum Parthenopæo,
Fulmine percussus decimo Capaneus superatur,
Undecimo sese perimunt per vulnere fratres,
Argivum flentem narrat duodecimus; & ignom.*

Of Archinoric's burying and the plaies,
And how Amphiaræus fill through the ground,
How Tydeus was slain, Lorde of Argoies,
And how Hipome'don in a litil stonde
Was dreint, and dedde Parthenope of wound,
And also how Capaneus the proude
With thonder dint was slain, that cryid loude. 1505

She gan eke tell him how that eithir brother,
Eteocles and Polynice also,
At a scarmishe eche of 'hem slough the ether,
And of Argivis weping and ther mo,
And how the toun was brent she told eke tho;
And tho discendid doune from jekis old
To Diomede, and thus she spake and told: 1514

This ilkè bore betokenith Diomede,
Tydeus sonne, that doune descendid is
Fro Mele'ager, that made the bore to blede,
And thy ladie, where so she be iwis,
This Diomedè her herte hath and she his:
Wepe if thou wolt or leue, for out of dout
This Diomedè is in and thou art out.

Thou saiest nat sothe, (quod he) thou forcere
With all thy falsè ghost of prophecie;
Thou wenist be a grete devinereffe,
Now seest thou nat this sole of fantasie
Painin her upon ladies for to lie:
Awaie, (quod he) there Jovis yeve the sorowe!
Thou shalt be fals para'venture er to morow.

As well thou mightist lien on gode Alceste,
That was of all creturis (but men lie)
That evir werin kindist and the beste,
For whan her husbonde was in jeopardie
To die himself, but if she wouldè die,
She chese for him to die and gon to hell,
And starfe anon, as us the bokis tell.

Cassandre goeth; and he with cruill herte
Foryate his wo for angre of her speche,
And fro his bedde all sodainly he sterte,
As though all whole him had imade a leche,
And daie by daie he gan enquire and seche
A sothe of this with all his besy cure;
And thus he drivith forthe his avinture.



Fortune, whiche that the permutacion
Of all thinges hath, as it is her committed
Through purveiaunce and disposicion
Of high Jove, as reynis shall ben yfitted
Fro folk to folk, or whan thei shal ben smitted,
Can pull awaie the fethirs bright of Troie
Fro daie to daie, till thei ben bare of joie. 1547

Emong all this the fine of the' jeopardie
Of Hector gan approchin wondir blive,
The Fatis would his soule should unbodie,
And shapin had a mene it out to drive,
Ayenst whiche fate him helpith not to frive,
But on a daie to fightin gan he wende,
At whiche, alas! he caught his liv'is ende: 1554

For whiche me thinkith every manir wight
That hauntith armis oughtin to bewaile
The deth of him that was so noble'a knight,
For as he drough a king by th'aventaile,
Unware of this Achilles through the maile
And through the bodie gan him for to rive,
And thus the worthy knight was rest of live; 1561

For whom, as oldè bokis tellin us,
Was made soch wo that tong it maie nat tel,
And namily the sorowe' of Troilus,
That next him was of worthinesse the well,
And in this wo gan Troilus to dwell,
That what for sorowe, love, and for unrest,
Lofst a daie he bad his hertè brest. 1568

But nathèlesse though he gon him dispaire,
 And drede aie that his ladie was untrue,
 Yet aie on her his hertè gan repaire,
 And, as these lovirs doen, he sought aie newe
 To get ayen Creseide bright of hewe,
 And in his herte he went her excusing,
 That Calchas cauld all her tarying. 1575

And oftin time he was in purpose grete
 Him selvin like a pilgrim to disgise
 To sene her; but he maie not counterfete
 To ben unknown of folke that werin wise,
 Ne finde excuse aright that maie suffice,
 If he among the Grekis knowin were,
 For whiche he wept full oft many a tere. 1582

To her he wrote yet oftin time all newe
 Full pitoufly, he left it nat for flouthe,
 Beseching her, fithins that he was true,
 That she would come ayen and hold her trouthe;
 For whiche Creseide upon a daie for routh,
 I take it so, touching all this matter

Wrote him ayen, and saied as ye maie here: 1589

Cupid'is sonne, ensample' of godelihede,
 O swerde of knighthode, sours of gentilnesse!
 How might a wight in turment and in drede,
 And helelesse, you sendin as yet gladnesse?
 I hertileffe, I sicke, I in distresse,
 Scns ye with me nor I with you maie dele,
 You neithir sende I maie ne herte ne hele.

Your lettirs full the papir all iplained
 Commevid havin myne hert'is pite;
 I have eke sene with teris all depainted
 Your lettir, and how ye requirin me
 To come ayen, whiche yet ne maie not be,
 But why, lest that this lettir foundin were,
 No mencioune ne make I now for fere.

1603

Grevous to me (God wote) is your unrest,
 Your hast, and that the goddis ordinaunce
 It semith nat ye take it for the best,
 Nor othir thing n'is in your remembraunce,
 As thinkith me, but onely your plesaunce;
 But beth nat wroth, and that I you beseeche,
 For that I tarie' is all for wickid speche:

1610

For I have herd well more than I wend
 Touching us two how things have istond,
 Whiche I shall with dissimuling amende;
 And beth nat wroth, I have eke undirstond
 How ye ne doe but holdin me in honde;
 But now no force; I can nat in you gessse
 But allè trouthe and allè gentilnesse.

1617

Comin I woll, but yet in soche disjoints
 I stond as now, that what yere or what daie
 That this shall be that can I nat apointe;
 But in effect I praie you as I maie
 Of your gode worde and of your frendship aie,
 For truily while that my life maie dure
 As for a frende ye maie in me assure.

1624

Yet praie I you on evill ye ne take

That it is short whiche that I to you write;
I dare nat there I am well lettirs make,
Ne nevyr yet ne could I well endite;
Eke grete effect men writin in place lite;
Th' entent is all, and nat the lettirs space:
And farith well; God have you in his grace! 1637

Le vostre, C.

This Troilus thought this lettir al straunge
Whan he it sawe, and sorowfully he sight;
Him thought it like a kalendes of eschaunge;
But, finally, he ful ne throwin might
That she ne would him holdin that she hight,
For with ful evill wil lifte him to leve
That lovith wel, in such case, though him greve. 1638

But nathelesse men sain that at the last
For any thing men shal the sothè se,
And siche a case betide, and that as fast,
That Troilus wel understode that she
N'as nat so kinde as that her ought to be;
And, finally, he wote now out of dout
That al is lost that he hath ben about. 1643

Stode on a daie in his melancolie

This Troilus, and in suspèctioun
Of her for whom he wenid for to die,
And so befel that throughout Troie toun,
As was the gife, iborne was up and doun
A manir cote armoure, as faithe the storie,
Besorn Deiphobe, in signe of his victorie;

The whichè cote, as tellith Lollius,
 Deiphobe it had yrente fro Diomedè
 The samè daie; and when this Troilus
 It sawe he gan to takin of it hede,
 Avising of the length and of the brede,
 And al the werke, but as he gan beholde
 Ful sodainly his herte began to colde, 1659

As he that on the coler fonde within
 A broche that he Creseidè yave at morow
 That she from Troiè toune must nedis twin
 In remembraunce of him and of his sorow,
 And she him laide ayen her faith to borow
 To kepe it aie; but now ful wel he wist
 His lady n'as no longir on to trist. 1666

He goeth him home, and gan ful sone sende
 For Pandarus, and al this newè chaunce
 And of this broch he tolde him orde and ende,
 Complaining of her hert's variaunce,
 His longè love, his trouth, and his penaunce;
 And astir Deth, withoutin wordis more,
 Ful fast he cried, his rest him to restore. 1673

Than spake he thus; O lady mine, Creseide!
 Where is your faith, and where is your behest?
 Where is your love? where is your trouth? he seide;
 Of Diomedè have ye now al this fest?
 Alas! I would have trowid at the lest
 That sene ye n'olde in trouthè to me stonde
 That ye thus n'olde have holdin me in honde. 1680

Who shal now trowen on any othis mo?
 Alas! I never would have wende er this
 That ye, Cresseidè, coulde have chaungid so,
 Ne but I had agilte and done amis;
 So cruel wende I nat your herte iwis
 To flee me thus; alas! your name of trooths
 Is now fordone, and that is al my routhe.. 1687

Was there none othir broche you list to lete
 To fessè with your newè love, (quod he)
 But thilkè broche that I with teris wete
 You yave as for a remembraunce of me?
 None other cause, alas! ne haddin ye
 But for dispite, and eke for that ye mente
 All uttirly to shewin your entente: 1694

Through which I se that clene out of your minde
 Ye have me cast, and I ne can nor maie
 For al this world within mine hertè finde
 To' unlovin you a quartir of a daie;
 In curfid time I borne was, welawaie!
 That you that done me all this wo endure
 Yet love I the best of any creture. 1701

Now God (quod he) me fendin yet the grace
 That I maie metin with this Diomede,
 And truily if I have might and space
 Yet shal I make I hope his fidis blede:
 Now God (quod he) that aughtist takin hede
 To forthrin trouthe, and wrongis to punice,
 Why n'ilt thou don a vengeance of this vice? 1708

O Pandarus! that in dremes for to trifle
 Me blamid hast, and wonte art oft upbreide,
 Now maist thou sene thy selfe, if that the list,
 How trewe is now thy necè bright Creseide:
 In sondry formis, (God it wote) he seide,
 The goddis shewin bothè joie and tene
 In slepe, and by my dreame it is now sene. 1715

And certainly, withoutin more speche,
 From hennis forthe, as ferforthe as I maie,
 Mine owne deth in armis wol I seche,
 I ne retche nat how sonè be the daie;
 But trewily, Creseidè, swetè Maie!
 Whom I have ay with al my might iserved,
 That ye thus done I have it nat deserved. 1722

This Pandarus, that al these thingis herde,
 And wiste wel that he said a sothe of this;
 He nat a worde ayen to him answerde,
 For fory of his frend'is sorow' he is,
 And shamid for his nece hath done amis,
 And stante astonied of these causis twaie
 As stil as stone; o worde ne coulde he saie. 1729

But at the last thus he yspake and seide:
 My brothir dere! I may do the no more;
 What should I faine? I hate iwis Creseide,
 And God it wote I wol hate her er-more;
 And that thou me besoughtist don of yore,
 Having unto mine honour ne my reste
 Right no regarde, I did al that the leste. 1736

TROILUS AND CRESSIDE.

Boke V.

I taught which that might likin the
 fe, and of this trefon now
 e that it a sorow is to me,
 delesse, for hert'is ese of you,
 ine I would amende it wist I how,
 o this world Almighty God I praie,
 her sone! I can no more saie. 1743
 at was the wne and plaint of Troilus,
 or the her course Fortune aie gan to holde,
 ide lovith the sonne of Tydeus,
 Troilus mote wepe in caris colde:
 n is this worlde, who so it can beholde;
 eche estate is litill hert'is reste;
 d leve us to takin it for the beste;
 In many cruil bataile, out of drede,
 of Troilus this ilke noble knight
 As men maie in these oldè bokis rede)
 Was fene his knighthod and his gretè might,
 And dredelesse his irè daie and night 1750
 Ful cruilly the Grekis aie abought,
 And alwaie most this Diomede he fought.
 And of tin timis I finde that thei mette
 With bloddy strokis and with wordis grete,
 Assaying how ther speris werin whette;
 And God it wote with many'a cruil hete
 Gan Troilus upon his helme to bete:
 But nathèlesse Fortune it naught ne would
 Of eithir's honde that eithir dyin should. 1755

And if I had itakin for to write
 The armis of this ilkè worthy man,
 Than would I of his battailis endite;
 But for that I to writin first began
 Of his love, I have saidin as I can
 His worthy dedis, who so lifte 'hem here,
 Rede Dares, he can tel 'hem al ifere. 1

Beseching every lady bright of hewe,
 And every gentil woman, what she be,
 Al be it that Creseidè was untrewè,
 That for that gilt ye be nat wroth with me,
 Ye maie her gilte in othir bokis se;
 And gladdir I would writin if you leste
 Of Penepole's trouth and gode Alceste. 1

Ne saie I nat this al only for men,
 But most for women that betrayid be
 Through fals folke, God yeve 'hem sorow, *Amen*
 That with ther gretè witte and subtilte
 Betrayin you, and this commevith me
 To speke; and in effecte you al I prais
 Beth ware of men, and herkenith what I saie: 1

Go, litil boke, go litill tragedie,
 There God my makir yet er that I die
 So sende me might to make some comedie;
 But, litill boke, make thou the none envie,
 But subject ben unto al poesie,
 And kisse the steppes wher as thou seist pace
 Of Virgil, Ovide, Homer, Lucan, Stace. 1

ere is so grete diversite

d in writing of our tonge,
 god that none miswrite the,
 metre for defaute of tonge;
 ere so thou be or ellis songe
 undirstonde God I beseeche;
 pose of my rathir speche.

1799

as I began you for to seie,
 Grekis boughtin dere,
 his hondis madin deye,
 withoutin any pere,
 : Hector, as I can here;

(save onely Godd's wil)
 in slough the fierse Achil.

1806

that he was slain in this manere
 he ful blisfully is went
 lownesse of the seventh sphere,
 ting overiche element,
 sawe, with ful avisement,
 sterres, herkening harmonie,

ful of hevins melodie.

1813

from thennis fast he gan avise
 te of erth that with the se.
 und fully gan dispise
 d world, and holde al vanite
 the plaine felicite
 ven above, and at the last
 : flaine his loking doun he cast.

1820

And in him selfe he lough right at the wo
Of them that weptin for his dethe so fast,
And dampnid all our werkes, that soloweth so
The blindè lust whiche that ne may nat last,
And shuldin al our herte on hevin cast;
And forthe he went, shortly for to tell,
There as Mercury fortid him to dwel. 1827

Suche fine hath, lo! this Troilus for love,
Suche fine hath all his gretè worthinesse,
Suche fine hath his estate royal above,
Suche fine his lust, such fine hath his noblesse,
Suche fine hath this false world's beotinesse!
And thus began his loving of Creseide
As I have tolde, and in this wise he deide. 1834

O yonge and freshe folkis, he or she!
In whiche that love up growith with your age,
Repairith home from worldely vanite,
And of your hertes up castith the visage
To thilkè God that aftir his image
You made, and thinkith al n'is but a faire,
This world that passith sone, as flouris faire: 1841.

And lovith him the whiche that right for love
Upon a crosse, our soulis for to bey,
First starfe and rose, and sit in heven above,
For he n'il fallin no wight, dare I sey,
That wol his hert al wholly on him ley;
And sens he best to love is and most meke
What nedith fainid lovis for to seke? 1848

Lo! here of Painims curfid oldè rites!

Lo! here what al ther goddis maie availe!

Lo! here this wretchid world'is appetites!

Lo! here, the fine and guerdon for travaile

Of Jove, Apollo, Mars, and fuch raskaile!

Lo! here the forme of oldè clerkis speche

In poetrie, if ye ther bokis feche!

1855

O, moral Gower! this Boke I directe

To the and to the philosophicall Strode,

To vouchsafe there nede is for to correcte

Of your benignities and zelis gode;

And to the sothfast Christ, that starfe on rode,

With al mine hert of mercy er I praie,

And to the Lorde right thus I speke and saie: 1862

Thou One, and Two, and Thre! eterne on live,

That raignist aie in Thre, and Two, and One!

Uncircumscript, and all maist circumscribe,

From visibill and invisibill fone

Defende us in thy mercy everichone!

So make us, Jesus, to thy mercy digne,

For love of maide and mothir thine benigne! 1869

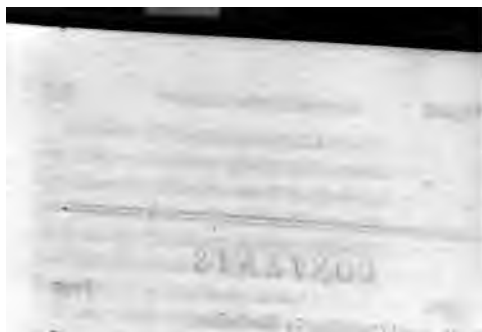
Thus endeth the fift boke and last of Troilus.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Troilus and Creseide. In five books.	
————— Boke III.	5
————— Boke IV.	70
————— Boke V.	131

From the APOLLO PRESS,
by the MARTINS,
Jan. 18. 1783.

END OF VOLUME NINTH.



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THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
GEOFF. CHAUCER.

IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

THE MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

From Urry's Edition 1721,

THE CANTERBURY TALES

From Tyrwhitt's Edition 1775.

Grete well CHAUCER whan ye mete----

Of dities and of songes glade,

The which be---made,

The londe fulfilled is over all.

GOWER.

My maister CHAUCER---chiefe poete of Bretayne----

Whom all this londe schulde of ryght preferre,

Sith of our langage he was the lode-sterre----

That made first to dysyle and rayne

The gold dewe dropys of speche and eloquence

Into our tunge thurgh his excellence.

LYDGATE.

The honour of English tong is dede----

My maister CHAUCER, floure of eloquence,

Mirroure of fructuous entendement,

Univerſel ſadir in ſcience----

This londeis verray treſour and richeſſe----

The firste fynder of our fayre langage.

OCCLEVE.

Venerabil CHAUCER, principall poete but pere,

Hevinly trumpet, orlege and regulere,

In eloquence balme, condit and diall,

Mylky fountane, clere strand, and rois riall,

Of fresche endite throw Albion land braid.

DOUGLAS.

O reverend CHAUCER! roſe of rethouris all,

As in oure tounge flour imperial

That raise in Brittain evir, quha reidis right

Thou heiris of Makers the triumphs royall,

The fresche enamilt termes celeſtiall:

This mater couth half illuminit full bright,

Was thou nocht, of our Inglis all the light,

Surmounting every tounge terrestriall

As far as Mayi's morrow dols midnigh.

DUNBAR.

VOL. X.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.



THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
GEOFFREY CHAUCER.
VOL. X.

CONTAINING HIS
MISCELLANEOUS PIECES, viz.

TESTAMENT OF CRESEIDE, || BELLE DAME SANS MERCY,
LEGENDE OF GOOD WOMEN, || ASSEMBLE OF LADIES,
PRAISE OF WOMEN, || &c. &c. &c.

But natheles certain
I can right now no thrifty Tale fain,
But CHAUCER, (though he can but lewedly
On metres and on riming craftily)
Hath sayd hem in swiche English as he can
Of olde time, as knoweth many a man;
And if he have not sayd hem, leve brother,
In o book, he hath sayd hem in another----
Who so that wol his large Volume seke. TALES, ver. 4465.

Dan CHAUCER, well of English undeñl'd,
On Fame's eternal bead-roll worthy to be fil'd----
Old Dan Geffrey, in whose gentle spright
The pure well-head of poetry did dwell----
He whilft he lived was the soveraigne head
Of shepherds all-----

SENSER.

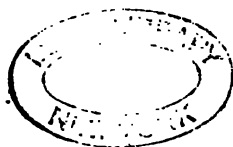
Old CHAUCER, like the morning star,
To us discovers day from far;
His light those mists and clouds dissolv'd
Which our dark nation long involv'd;
But he descending to the shades
Darkness again the age invades.

DENHAM.

CHAUCER, him who first with harmony inform'd
The language of our fathers---His legends blithe
He sang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
Of homely life, thro' each estate and age
The fashions and the follies of the world
With cunning hand portraying----
Him who in times-----
Dark and untaught began with charming verse
To tame the rudeness of his native land.

AKENSIDE.

EDINBURG:
AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.
Anno 1782.



MISCELLANIES.

Here followeth the pitiful and dolorous

TESTAM. OF FAIRE CRESEIDE.

A DOLY seson till a carefull dite
Should coresonde and be equivalent;
Right so it was whan I began to write
This tragedy, the wedir right fervent,
Whan Aries in middis of the Lent
Showris of haile gan fro the north discende,
That scantly fro the' cold I might me defende. 7

Yet, pertheless within mine orature
I stode, whan Titan had his bemis bright
Withdrawin down, and scyldid undir care,
And faire Venus the beaute of the night,
Upraise, and sette unto the weste sul right
Her goldin face, in oppositioun
Of god Phœbus, directe discending down. 14

Testament of Creseide] The author of *The Testament of Creseide*, which might pass for the sixth book of this story, I have been informed by Sir James Erskine late Earl of Kellie, and diverse aged scholars of the Scottish nation, was one Mr. Robert Henderson, chief schoolmaster of Dumferlin, a little time before Chaucer was first printed, and dedicated to King Henry VIII. by Mr. Thynne, which was near the end of his reign. Mr. Henderson wittily observing that Chaucer in his fifth book had related the death of Troilus, but made no mention what became of Creseide, he learnedly takes upon him, in a fine poetical way, to expreis the punishment and end due to a false unconstant whore, which commonly terminates in extreame misery. *Urry,*

Throughout the glasse her bemis braut so faire
 That I might se on every side me by,
 The northrin winde hath perified the aire,
 And shedde his misty cloudis fro the skie,
 The froste fresid, the blastis bittirly
 Fro pole Artike came whiffing loud and still,
 And causid me remove ayenst my will: 21

For I trustid that Venus, Lov's quene,
 To whom sometime I hight obedience;
 My fadid hert of love she would make grene,
 And therupon with humble reverence
 I thought to prais her hie magnificence,
 But for grete colde as than I lettid was,
 And in my chambere to the fire gan pas. 28

Though love be hote, yet in a man of age
 It kindlith nat so sone as in youthed,
 Of whom the blode is flowing in a rage,
 And in the olde the corage dul and ded,
 Of whiche the fire outwarde is best remed:
 To help by phisike wher that nature failed
 I am experte, for bothe I have assailed. 35

I made the fire and bekid me aboute,
 Than toke I drinke my spiritis to comforte,
 And armid me wel fro the colde theroute:
 To cutte the wintir night and make it shorte
 I toke a quere, and leste al othir sporte,
 Writin by worthy Chaucer glorious
 Of faire Creseide and lusty Troilus: 42

And there I founde aftir that Diomedee
 Recevid had that lady bright of hewe
 How Troilus nere out of his witte abrede,
 And wept full sore, with visage pale of hewe,
 For which wanhope his teris gan renewe
 While Esperus rejoyfid him againe;
 Thus while in joie he lived and while in paine. 49

Of her behest he had grete comforting,
 Trusting to Troie that she wold make retour,
 Whiche he desired most of al erthly thing,
 For why? she was his onely paramour;
 But whan he sawe passid both day and hour
 Of her gaincome, in sorowe gan oppresse
 His woful herte in care and hevinesse. 56

Of his distresse me nedith nat reherse,
 For worthy Chaucer in that samè boke
 In godely termis and in joly verse
 Compilid hath his caris, who will loke:
 To breke my slepe anothir quere I roke,
 In which I founde the fatal destiny
 Of faire Creseide, which endid wretchidly. 63

Who wote if all that Chaucer wrate was trewe?
 Nor I wote nat if this narracion
 Be authorifed, or forgid of the newe
 Of some poete by his invencion,
 Made to reporte the lamentacion
 And wofull ende of this lusty Creseide,
 And what distresse she was in or she deide. 70

Whan Diomedes had al his appetite
 And more fulfillid of this faire lady
 Upon anothir sette was his delite,
 And sende to her a libel repudy,
 And her excludid fro his company;
 Than desolate she walkid up and down,
 As some men saie in the courte as commune. 77

O faire Creseide! the floure and a per se
 Of Troie and Grece, how were thou fortunate
 To chaunge in filthe al thy feminite,
 And be with fleshly lust so maculate,
 And go among the Grekes erly and late
 So giglotlike, taking thy soule plesaunce!
 I have pite the should fall suche mischaunce. 84

Yet nerthelasse, what er men deme or say
 In scornfull langage of thy brutilnesse,
 I shall excuse as ferforth as I may
 Thy womanhed, thy wisedome, and fairnesse,
 The which Fortune hath put to suche distresse
 As her plesid, and nothing through the gylte
 Of the through which langage to be spilt. 91

This faire lady, on this wise destitute
 Of al comforte and consolatioun,
 Right prively, without selp'whip or refute,
 Dishevelid, passid out of the toun
 A mile or two unto a mansioun
 Bildid ful gaie, wher her fathir Calchas
 Which than among the Grekis dwelling was. 98

Whan her he saw the cause he gan enquire
 Of her comming: she said, sighing ful fore,
 For Diomede had gottin his desire
 He woxe wery, and would of me no more.
 Quod Calchas, Doughtir, wepe thou nat therfore,
 Paravinture al comith for the best:
 Welcome; to me thou art ful dere a gest. 105

This olde Calchas, astir the lawe was tho,
 Was kepir of the temple as a preste
 In whiche Venus and her sonne Cupido
 Were honourid, and his chambre was nest,
 To which Creseide with bale enewed in brest
 Ufid to passe, her prayirs for to saie,
 While at the last upon a solempne daie, 112

As custome was, the peple ferre and nere
 Before the none unto the temple went
 With sacrifice devout in ther manere;
 But stil Creseide, hevy in her entent,
 Into the church would nat her self present,
 For giving of the peple' any deming
 Of her expulse fro Diomede the King, 119

But passid into' a secrete oratore,
 Where she might wepe her wofull destiny;
 Behinde her backe she closid fast the dore;
 And on her kneis bare fel down in hie;
 Upoh Venus and Cupide angrily
 She cryid out, and sayid in this wise,
 Alas that er I made you sacrifice! 126

IDE.

saile

in Troie;

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ie:

now convoie,

Croilus

133

ous?

wite but thou,

a blinde goddace;

waie and throw

on my face,

ugh your sople grace;

ith frost is flaine,

all forlaine.

un in an extasy,

dreme she fel,

rde where she did lie

ng a silvir bel,

re fro hevin into hel,

iore Cupido aperes

ascending fro the spheres

wir of al thing gene'rabl

by their gret influence

; and course variable;

aturne gave his sentence,

Cupide litil reverence,

as chorle in his manere

ly with austring loke and cl

His face frounid, his lere was like the lede,
 His tethe chattrid, and shauered with the chin,
 His eyin drouped, whole sonkin in his hede,
 Out at his nose the mildrop fast gan rin,
 With lippis blew, and chekis lene and thin,
 The ifeicklis that fro his heer doune honge
 Was wondir grete, and as a spere as longe; 161

Attour his belte his liart lockis haie
 Feltrid unfaire, or fret with frostis hore,
 His garment and his gite ful gay of graie,
 His widrid wede fro him the winde out wore,
 A boustous bowe within his honde he bore,
 Undir his girdle' a fashe of felone flains
 Fedrid with ife and hedid with holstains. 168

Than Jupiter right faire and amiable,
 God of the sterris in the firmament,
 And norice to al thing generable,
 Fro his fathir Saturne farre different,
 With burly face, and browis bright and brent,
 Upon his hed a garlonde wondirs gaie
 Of flouris faire, as it had ben in Maie; 175

His voice was clere, as cristal was his eien,
 As goldin wler so glittring was his here,
 His garment and his gite ful gaie of grene,
 With goldin listis gilté on every gere,
 A burly brandy about his middle' he bere,
 And in' his right hand he had a groundin spere,
 Of his fathir the wrothe fro us to bere. 182

g.

of ire,

re,

obergioun,

anchoon,

y sworde,

angry worde;

189

Cupide he come,

owing eien,

flode of forne,

s tukis kente,

perauance in tene,

many boustous bragge, 195

th warre hath made to wagge.

lanterne and lampe of light,

frute and florishing,

anishir of night,

causing by his moving

in al erthly thing,

of whom of force to nought. 203

that this world hath wrought,

all he rode upon a chare,

haeton somtime gidid unright,

effe of his face when it was bare

ocholde for perling of his sight,

a carte with firy bemis bright

id stedis ful different of hewe

or tiring through the spheris drew. 219

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TESTAMENT OF CRESEIDE.

The first was forde, with mane as red as r
Callid Eoye in the orient,
The seconde stede to name hight Ethiofe,
Whitely and pale, and fomdele ascendent,
The third Pyrois, right hote and fervent,
The fourth was blak, and callid Phlegosse,
Which rollith Phœbus down into the se.

Venus was there present, that goddes gay,
Her sonn'is quarrel to defende, and make
Her owne complaint, cladde in a nice aray,
The one halfe grene, th' othir halfe fable blake,
White heer as gold, kembit and shede abake,
But in her face semid grete variaunce,
Whiles parfite truth and whilis inconstaunce. 21

Undir smiling she was diffimulate,
Provocative with blinkis amorous,
And sodainly chaungid and alterate,
Angry as any serpent venomous,
Right pungitive with wordis odious;
Thus variaunt she was, who list take kepe,
With one eye laugh and with the othir wepe, 23
In tokening that al fleschely paramour,
Which Venus hath in rule and govirnaunce,
Sometime swete, sometime bittir and sour,
ght unstable, and ful of variaunce,
igid with careful joye and false pleasaunce,
v hotte, now colde, now blith, now ful of wo,
grene as lefe, now widrid and ago. 23

lume X.

B

With boke in hand than come Mercurious,
 Right eloquent and ful of rethoric,
 With polite termes and delicious,
 With penne and inke to reporte al redie,
 Setting songis and singing merily,
 His hode was red beclid attour his croun,
 Like til a poete of the olde fassoun.

245

Boxis he bare with fine electuaries
 And sugrid siropes for digestion,
 Spicis belonging to the potiquares,
 With many wholsome swete confectioun,
 Doctor in phisike cledde in scarlet gown,
 And furrid wel, as suchē one ought to be,
 Honest and gode, and nat a worde couth lie.

252

Next after him come Lady Cynthia
 The laste of al, and swiftist in her sphere,
 Of colour blake, buskid with hornis twa,
 And in the night she listith best t'apere,
 Hawe as the leed, of colour nothing clere,
 For al the light she boroweth at her brother
 Titan, for of her selfe she hath non other.

259

Her gite was gray and ful of spottis blake,
 And on her brest a chorle paintid ful even,
 Bering a bushe of thornis on his bake,
 Whiche for his theft might clime no ner the heven.
 Thus when thei gadrid were the goddis seven
 Mercurius thei chosed with one assent
 To be fore-spekir in the parliment.

266

Who had ben there and liking for to here
 His faconde tonge and termis exquisite,
 Of rethorike the praetike he might lere,
 In brefe sermon a preignant sentençe write,
 Before Cupide, valing his capps a lite,
 Speris the cause of that vocacioun,
 And he anon shewde his entencioun. 273

I.o, quod Cupide, who wol blasfeme the name
 Of his owne god either in worde or dede
 To al goddis he doeth bothe losse and shame,
 And should have bittir painis to his mede;
 I saiè this by yondir wretche Creseide,
 The whiche through me was somtime flour of love;
 Me' and my mothir she stately can reprove, 280
 Saying of her gret infelicite

I was the cause, and my mothir Venus
 She called a blinde goddes and might nat fe,
 With sclaunder and defame injurious;
 Thus her living unclene and lechirous
 She would retorte on me and my mother,
 To whom I shewde my grace above al other. 287

And sithe ye are al fevin dedicate
 Participant of divine sapience,
 'This gret injury done to' our hie estate
 Me thinke with paine we shuld make recompence;
 Was ner to goddis done suche violence;
 As wel for you as for my selfe I saie,
 Therefore go help to revenge I you praie. 294

Mercurius to Cupide gave answere,
 And said, Sir King, my counsaile is that ye
 Referre you to the hyll planet here,
 And take to him the lowist of degre,
 The paine of Creseide for to modifie,
 As God Saturne with him take Cynthia.
 I am content (quod he) to take thei twa. 301

Than thus procedid Saturne and the Mone,
 Whan thei the matir ripely had digest,
 For the dispite to Cupide that she had done,
 And to Venus opin and manifest,
 In al her life with pain to be oprest,
 And turment fore, with sikenesse incurable,
 And to al lovors be abhominable. 308

This doleful sentence Saturne toke in hande,
 And passid down where carefull Creseide laie,
 And on her hed he laide a frosty wandre,
 Than lafully on this wise gan he saie;
 Thy grete fairenesse and al thy beauty gaie,
 Thy wanton blode, and eke thy goldin here,
 Here I exclud fro the for evirmere. 315

I chaunge thy misthe into melancoly,
 Whiche is the mothir of al pensivenesse,
 Thy moistir and thy hete to colde and dry,
 Thine insolence, thy plaie and wantonnesse,
 To grete disese, thy pompe and thy richesse
 Into mortal nede and grete penurie;
 Thou suffre shalt, and as a beggir die. 322

TESTAMENT OF CRESEIDE.

O cruil Saturne! froward and angrie,
 Harde is thy dome and to malicious,
 Of faire Creseide why hast thou no mercie,
 Whiche was so swete, gentill, and amorous?
 Withdrawe thy sentence and be gracious,
 As you were ner, so shewith through thy dede
 A wrekeful sentence givin on Creseide. 335

Than Cynthia, whan Saturne past awaie,
 Out of her sete discendid dounè blive,
 And red a bill on Creseide where she laie,
 Containing this sentence diffinitive,
 Fro hele of body here I the deprive,
 And to thy sikeness shal be no recure;
 But in dolour thy dayis to endure; 336

Thy cristal'eyen mengid with blode I make,
 Thy voice so clere unplefaunt here and hace,
 Thy lustie lere orspred with spottis blake,
 And lumpis hawe appering in thy face,
 Where thou comist eche man shall fie the place;
 Thus shalt thou go begging fro hous to hous
 With cuppe and clappir, like a lazarous. 343

This dolie dreme, this ugly visoun,
 Brought till an ende, Creseide fro it awoke,
 And all that courte and convocaoun
 Vanished awaie; than rose she up and toke
 A polished glasse, and her shadowe couth loke,
 And whan she sawe' her visage so deformate
 If she in herte were wo I n'ote, God wate. 350

Weping ful sore, Lo! what it is (quod she)
 With froward langage for to move and stere
 Our crabbid goddes! and so' is sene on me;
 My blaspheming now have I bought ful dere,
 All yerthly joie and mirthe I set arere;
 Alas this date, alas this wofull tide,
 Whan I began with my goddis to chide! 357

By this was saied a childe came fro the hal
 To warne Creseide the suppir was redie,
 First knockid at the dore, and eft couth call,
 Madame, your fathir biddeth you cum in hie,
 He hath marveile so long on grose ye lie,
 And saith your bedis beth to long fomdele,
 The goddis wote all your entent full wele. 364

Quod she; Faire child, go to my fathir dere,
 And prais him come to speke with me anon;
 And so he did, and saied, Doughtir, what chere?
 Alas! (quod she) fathir, my mirthe is gone.
 How so? (quod he) and she gan all expone
 As I have told, the vengeaunce and the wrake
 For her trespas Cupide on her couth take. 371

He lokid on her ugly lepir's face,
 The whiche before was white as lily flour,
 Wringing his handes oftimis saied Alace
 That he had lived to se that wofull hour!
 For he knewe well that there was no focour
 To her siknesse, and that doubld his pain:
 Thus was there care inow betwixt 'hem twain.

Whan thei togidir mournid had full lang,
 Quod Creseide; Fathir, I would nat be kende,
 Therfore in secrete wise ye let me gange
 To yon hospitall at the toun'is ende,
 And thidir some mete for charite me sende
 To live upon, for all mirth in this yerth
 Is fro me gone, soche is my wickid werth; 385

Whan in a mantill and a bevir hat,
 With cuppe and clappir, wondir privily
 He' opened a secrete gate, and out therat
 Conveyid her that no man should espie,
 There to a village halfe a mile therchie
 Delivered her in at the spittill hous,
 And daily sente her part of his almous. 392

Sum knew her well, and sum had no knowlege
 Of her, bicause she was so deformate,
 With bilis blake orspred in her visage,
 And her faire colour fadid and alt'erate;
 Yet thei presumid for her hic regrate
 And still mourning she was of noble kin,
 With bittir will there thei tokin her in. 399

The daie passid, and Phœbus went to rest,
 The cloudis blake orwhelid all the skie,
 God wote if Creseide were a sorowfull gest,
 Seing that uncouth fare and herborie;
 But mete or drinke she drestid her to lie,
 In a darke cornir of the hous alone,
 And on this wise weping she made her mone. 406

U foppe of forowe fonkin into care;
O caitife Creſeide now and evirmare!
Gon is thy jole and al thy mirthe in yerth;
Of all blichneſſe now art thou blake and bare;
There is no ſalve that helpin maie thy face;
Fell is thy fortune, wickid is thy werthe,
Thy bliſſe is baniſhed, and thy bale unbende;
Undir the grete God if I gravin ware
Wher men of Grece ne yet of Troie might her
Where is thy chambir wantonly beſette,
With burly bed and blankits broudid bene,
Spicis and wine to thy colatioun,
The cuppis all of gold and ſilvir thene,
Thy ſwete metis ſervid in platis clene,
With ſaverie ſauce of a gode faſhoun,
Thy gaie garnientes with many gode y gowne,
Thy pleaſant laune pinnid with goldin y pene,
All is arere thy grete roiall rene un.
Where is thy gardein with thy Grechis gaie
And freſhe flouris, which the quene Floride
Had paintid pleaſantly in every paine,
Where thou were wont full merily in Maie
To walke, and take the dewe by it was daie
And here the merle and mavise many one,
With ladies faire in carolling to gone,
And ſo ther roiall renkis in ther raie?

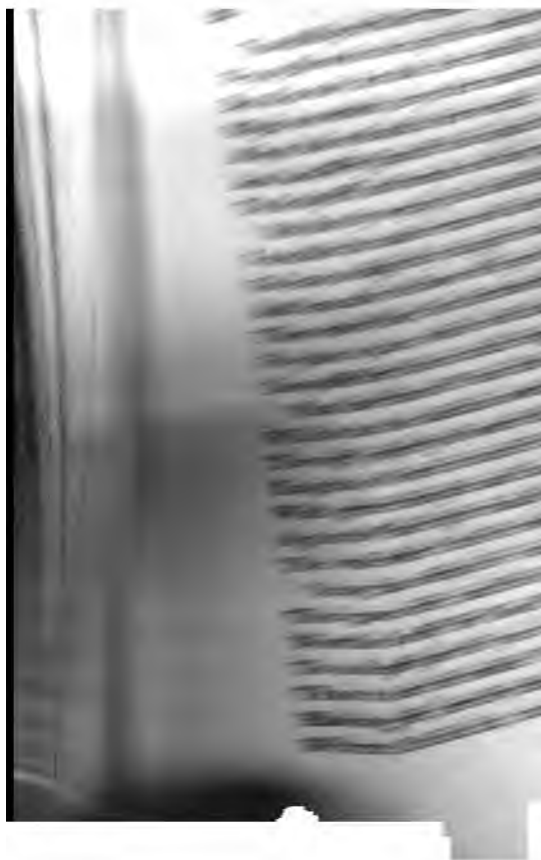
TESTAMENT OF CRESEIDE.

This lepir loge take for thy godely houre,
And for thy bed take now a bounche of stro,
For wailid wine and metis thou had tho
Take mouldid bred, pirate and fidir soure,
But cuppe and clappir is all now ago.

My clere voice and my courtly carolling
Is ranke as roke, full bidous here and hace,
Deformid is the figure of my face,
To loke on it no peple hath liking,
So sped in fight, I saie with fore fighting
Lying emong the lepir folke, Alas!

O ladies faire of Troie and Grece! attende
My freile fortune, mine infelicite,
My grete mischefe which no man can amend,
And in your minde a mirrour make of me;
As I am now paravinture that ye,
For al your might, may come to the same ende
Or ellis worse, if any worse maie be;
Beware therefore, approachith nere your ende.

Nought is your fairnesse but a fading floure,
Nought is your famous laude and hie honour
But winde inflate in othir mennis eres,
Your rosing redde to roting shall retoure,
Exemple make of me in your memoure,
Which of soche thingis wofull witnes beres,
Al welth in yerth as wind awaie it weres;
Beware therfore, approachith nere your hour.





TESTAMENT OF CRESEIDE.

23

Than upon him she keft up bothe her eyen,
And with a blinke it come intill his thought
That he fomtime her face before had feyn,
But ſhe was in ſoche plight he knew her nought,
Yet than her loke into his minde he brought,
The ſwete viſage and amorous blenking
Of faire Creſeide, ſomtime his own derling. 494

No wondir was ſuppoſe in mind that he
Toke her figure ſo ſone; and lo! now why
The' idea of a thing in caſe maie be
So depe enprintid in the fantaſie
That it deludith the wittes outwardly,
And ſo appereth in forme and like eſtate
Within the minde as it was figurate. 501

A ſparke of love than til his hert couth ſpring,
And kindilid his body in a fire
With hote fevir, in ſwette, and trembling
Him toke, while he was redie to exſpire;
To bere his ſhilde his breſt begon to tire,
Within a while he chaungid many'a hewe,
And nertheles nat one anothir knewe. 508

For knightly pite and memoriell
Of faire Creſeide a girdill gan he take,
A purſe of golde, and many'a gaie jewell,
And in the ſkirte of Creſeide doun gan ſhake,
Than rode awaie, and nat a worde he ſpake,
Penſiſe in herte, while he came to the tounne,

The lepre folke to Creseide then couth draw,
To se the equall distribucioun
Of the almofe; but whan the golde they sawe
Eche one to othir privily gan roun,
And faied, Yon lorde hath more affectioun,
Hower it be, unto yon Lazarous
Than to us all, we knewe by his almous. 522

What lorde is yon, (quod she) have ye no fele,
That doeth to us so grete humanite?
Yes, quod a lepre man, I knowe him wele,
Troilus it is, a knight gentle and fre.
Whan Creseide understode that it was he
Stiffir than stele there sterte a bitir stound 523
Throughout her hert, and fill doune to the ground.

Whan she, orcome with sighing sore and sad,
With many' a carefull crie and cold atone,
Now is my brest with stormie stoundis flad,
Wrappid in wo, oh wretchfull will of one!
Than fell in swoun ful oft or she would fone,
And evir in her swouning cried she thus,
O false Creseide, and true knight Troilus! 536

Thy love, thy laude, and all thy gentilnesse,
I comptid small in my prosperite,
So efflatid I was in wantonnesse,
And clambe upon the sickle whele so hie,
All faith and love I promittid to the
Was in thy self skill and furious;
O false Creseide, and true knight Troilus! 543

For love of me thou kept thy countinaunce
 Honest and chaste in conversacion;
 Of all women protectour and defence
 Thou were, and helpid ther opinion:
 My minde on fleshy soule affection
 Was enclinid to lustis lecherous;
 Fie, false Creseide! o true knight Troilus!

550

Lovirs, beware, and take gode hede about
 Whom that ye love, for whan ye suffre pain
 I let you wit there is right fewe throughout
 Whom ye maie trust to have true love again;
 Prove whan you woll, your labour is in vain;
 Therefore I rede ye take them as ye finde,
 For thei are sad as wedircocke in winde.

557

Bicause I knowe the grete unstablenesse,
 Brittle as glasse, unto my selfe I saie,
 Trusting in othir as grete brutilnesse,
 As inconstaunt, and as untrue of saie;
 Though some be true I wot right few ar thei:
 Who findith truthe let him his lady ruse;
 None but my self as now I woll accuse.

564

Whan this was said with papir she fat down,
 And in this manir made her Testament;
 Here I bequeth my corse and carioun
 With wormis and with todis to be rent,
 My cuppe, my clappir, and mine ornament,
 And all my gold, these lepre folke shall have,
 Whan I am dedde to burie me in grave.

571

TESTAMENT OF CRESEIDE.

royall ring, set with this rubie redde,
e Troilus in dowrie to me sende,
m again I leue it whan I'am dedde,
ake my careful deth unto him kende :
as I conclude shortly and make an ende ;
y sp'rit I leue to Diane, where she dwelles,
a walke with her in waite wadis and welles, 578
O Diomedes! thou hast bothe broche and belce
Whiche Troilus gave me in tokining
Of his true love; and with that worde she swelt.

And sone a lepirman toke off the ring,
Than buried her withoutin taryng ;
To Troilus forthwith the ring he bare,
And of Creseide the deth he gan declare, 583
Whan he had herd her grete infirmitie,

Her legacie, and lamentacioun,
And how she endid in soche povertie,
He swelt for wo, and fell doune in a swoun,
For sorowe his herte to brast was boun,
Sighing full sadly saied I can no more,
She was untrue, and wo is me therfore.
Some saith he made a tombe of marble grai
And wrote her name and superscripcioun,
And laid it on her grave whereas she laie,
In golden lettirs, containing this resoun ;
Lo! faire ladies, Creseide of Troie toun,
Somtime comptid the floure of womanhe
Under this stone, late lepir, lyith dedde!

Now worthy women, in this balade short,
 Made for your worship and instruction,
 Of charite I monishe and exhorte,
 Minge nat your love with false discepcion,
 Bere in your minde this fore conclusion
 Of faire Creseide as I have saied bespre;
 Sith she is dedde I speke of her no more. 6c6
Thus endeth the pitefull and dolorous Tref. of faire Creseide.

THE LEGENDE OF GOOD WOMEN.

A Thousand timis I have herd men tell
 That there is joie in heven and pain in hell,
 And I acord it wele that it is so,
 But nathèlesse yet wot I wele also
 That there n'is non dwelling in this countre 5
 That eithir hath in heven or hell ihe,
 Ne maie of it none othir waies wittin
 But as he herd saied or found it writtin,
 For by assaie there maie no man it preve.
 But God forbede but that men shuldin leve 10

Legende of Good Women] Some ladies in the court took offence at Chaucer's large speeches against the untruth of women, therefore the Queen enjoined him to compile this book in the commendation of fundry maidens and wives who thewed themselves faithful to faithless men. This seems to have been written after The Flower and the Leaf.

Well more thing than thei han seen with eye!
Men shall nat wenin every thing a lie
But if himself it seeth or els it doeth,
For God wote thing is nevir the lesse soth
Though every wight ne maie it not ise. 13

Bernarde the monke ne saugh not all parde,
Than motè we to bokis that we finde,
(Through which the oldè thingis ben in ruinde)
And to the doctrine of these oldè wise,
Yeve credence in evèry skilfull wise, 20
That tellin of these old apprevid stories
Of holines, of reigis, of vi stories,
Of love, of hate, and othir sondrie thinges,
Of whiche I maie not makin reherfinges;
And if that oldè bokis were awaie 25
Ilorne were of all remembraunce the kaie.

Well ought us than honourin and beleve
These bokis there we han none othir preve.

And as for me, though that I can but lite,
On bokis for so rede I me delite, 30
And to hem yeve I faithe and full credence,
And in mine herte have hem in revèrence
So hertily, that there is gamè none
That fro my bokis makith me to gone,
But it be seldome, on the holie daie, 35
Save certainly whan that the month of Maie
Is comin, and I here the foulis sing,
And that the flouris ginnin for to spring,

Farwell my boke and my devocion.

Now have I than eke this condicion, 40

That above all the flouris in the mede

Than love I moſte theſe flouris white and rede,

Soche that men callin Daiſies in our toun ;

To them have I ſo grete affectioun,

As I ſaied erſt, whan comin is the Maie, 45

That in my bedde there dawith me no daie

That I n'am up and walking in the mede

To ſene this floure ayenſt the ſunnè ſprede

Whan it upriſith erly by the morowe ;

That bliſfull ſight ſoftinith all my ſorowe ; 50

So glad am I whan that I have preſence

Of it to doin it all revèrence,

As ſhe that is of all flouris the floure,

Fulſillid of all vertue and honoure,

And evir ilike faire and freſhe of hewe 55

As wel in wintir as in ſummir newe ;

'This love I evre', and ſhall until I die,

All ſwere I not of this, I woll nat lie.

There lovid no wight hottir in his life ;

And whan that it is eve I rennè blithe, 60

As ſone as evir the ſunne ginnith weſt,

To ſene this floure how it woll go to reſt ;

For fere of night, ſo hatith ſhe derkneſſe,

Her chere is plainly ſpred in the brightneſſe

Of the ſunnè, for there it woll uncloſe : 65

Alas that I ne' had Engliſhe, rime, or proſe,

Suffisaunt this flourè to praise aright!
But helpith ye that han conning and might,
Ye lovirs, that can make of sentiment;
In this case ought ye to be diligent
To forthrin me fomewhat in my labour,
Whether ye ben with the Lefe or the Flour,
For well I wote that ye han here beforne
Of making ropen and lad awaie the corne,
And I come astir glening here and there,
And am full glad if I maie finde an ere
Of any godely worde that ye han leste;
And though it happe me to reherfin eft
That ye han in your freschè songis saied
Forberith me, and beth not ill apaied,
Sith that ye se I doe it in the' honour
Of Love, and eke in service of the flour,
Whom that I serve as I have wit or might;
She is the clerenesse and the very light
That in this derke world me windith and ledet.
The hert within my wofull brest you dredeth
And loveth so fore, that ye ben verily
The maittris of my wit and nothing I;
My worde, my workes, is knit so in your bond
That as an harpe obeyith to the honde,
And makith sounne astir his fingiring,
Right so mowe ye out of mine hertè bring
Soch voice right as you list to laugh or pain;
Be ye my guide and ladie soverain:

LEGENDE OF GOOD WOMEN.

32

As to mine yerthly god to you I call 95
 Bothe in this werke and my sorowis all.
 But wherfore that I spake to yeve credence,
 To old stories, and doen 'hem revèrence,
 And that men mustin morè thing bileve
 Than men may sene at eye or ellis preve, 100
 That shall I sein whan that I se my time;
 I maie not all at onis speke in rime;
 My busie ghost, that thurstith alwaie newe
 To sene this flour so yong, so freshe of hewe,
 Constrainid me with so gredie desire 105
 That in mine herte I felin yet the fire
 That madè me to rise er it were daie,
 And this was now the first morowe of Maie,
 With dredfull herte and glad devocion
 For to ben at the resurrection 110
 Of this flourè, whan that it should unclofe
 Again the sunne, that rose as redde as rose,
 That in the brest was of the best that daie
 That Agenor's doughtir ladde awaie;
 And doune on knees anon right I me sette, 115
 And as I could this freshe flour I grette,
 Kneling alwaie till it unclofid was
 Upon the small, and soft, and swetè gras,
 That was with flouris swete embroudid al,
 Of soche swetnesse and soche odour oer all 120
 That for to spekin of gomme, herbe, or tre,
 Comparison maie none imakid be,

LEGENDE OF GOOD WOMEN.

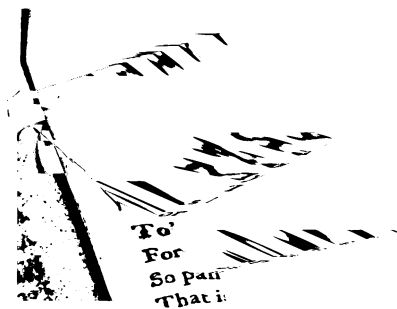
surmountith plainly all odoures,
 of riche beaute the most gaye of floures.
 tatin had the yerth his port estate 123
 ntir, that him nakid made and mate,
 with his sworde of colde so fore greved;
 hath the' azempre sonne al that releved
 nakid was, and clad it newe again;
 mallè foulis, of the seson-fain, 130
 of the panter and the net ben scaped,
 the foulir that 'hem made awhaped
 ntir, and distroyid had ther brode,
 dispire them thought it did 'hem gode
 ng of him, and in ther song dispise 135
 foulè chorle that for his covitise
 'hem betrayid with his sophistrie:
 was ther song; The foulir we desie,
 all his craste: and some yfongin clere
 s of love, that joie it was to here, 140
 orshipping and praïsing of her make,
 for the newè blisfull somir's sake;
 the braunchis full of blofms soft
 er delite thei tournid 'hem full oft,
 fongin, Blissid be Sain& Valentine! 145
 n his daie I chese you to be mine,
 outin repenting, mine hertè swete!
 therwithall their beekis gonnin mete,
 ing honour and humble obeisaunce
 ove, and didden ther othir observaunce 150

That longith unto love and to nature;
 Constrewe that as you list; I doe no cure:
 And tho that had doin unkindenesse,
 As doeth the tidife for newefangelnesse,
 Befoughtin mercie of ther trespassing, 155
 And humilly songin ther repenting,
 And sworin on the blosmis to be true,
 So that ther makis would upon 'hem rue:
 And at the last thei madin ther acorde,
 All found thei Daungir for the time a lorde, 160
 Yet Pite thorough his strong gentill might
 Foryave, and madè mercie passin right
 Through Innocence and rulid Curtisie;
 But I ne clepe nat innocence folie,
 Ne false pite, for vertue is the mene, 165
 As Ethicke saieth, in soche manir I mene:
 And thus these foulis, voide of all malice,
 Accordidin to love, and lastin vice
 Of hate, and songin all of one acorde,
 Welcome Sommir, our govirnour and lorde! 170
 And Zephyrus and Flora gentilly
 Yave to the flouris soft and tendirly
 Ther sotè brèth, and made 'hem for to sprede,
 As god and goddesse of the flourie mede,
 In whiche me thought I mightè daie by daie 175
 Dwellin alwaie the joly monthe of Maie
 Withoutin slepe, withoutin mete or drinke:
 Adoune full softly I gan to sink,

And lening on my elbowe and my side
The longè daie I shope me for to' abide, 1
For nothing ellis, and I shall nat lie,
But for to lokin upon the Daisie,
That well by refon men it callè maie
The Daisie, or els the eye of the daie,
The emprise, and the floure of flouris all: 1
I praie to God that fairè mote she fall,
And all that lovin flouris for her sake!
But nathelesse ne wene nat that I make
In praising of the Floure again the Lefe
No more than of the corne again the shefe, 1
For as to me n'is levir none ne lother;
I n'am withholdin yet with neithir nother,
Ne' I n'ot who servith Lefe ne who the Floure;
Well broukin thei ther service or labour;
For this thing is all of anothis tonne, 1
Of old florie, er soche thing was begonne.
Whan that the sunne out of the south gan west,
And that this floure gan close and gon to rest,
For derknes of the night the which she drede,
Home to mine house full swiftly I me sped 2
To gone to rest, and erly for to rise
To sene this floure to sprede as I devise;
And in a little herbir that I have,
That benchid was of turvis freshe igrave,
I bad men shoudin me my couchè make; 2
For deinte of the newè fommir's sake

LEGENDE OF GOOD WOMEN.

bad 'hem strawin flouris on my bedde:
Whan I was laied and had mine eyin hedde
fell allepe, and slept an houre or two,
Me met how I laie in the midowe tho
To sene this floure that I love so and drede,
And from aserre came walking in the mede
The god of Love, and in his hande a queene,
And she was clad in roiall habite grene,
A fret of goldè she had next her here,
And upon that a white coroune she bere
With flourounis small, and, I shall nat lie,
For all the worldè right as a Daisie
Icrounid is, with whitè levis lite,
So were the florouns of her crounè white,
For of o perlè fine orientall
Her whitè coroune was imakid all,
For which the white coroune above the grene
Ymade her like a Daisie for to sene,
Confidrid eke her fret of gold above;
Iclothid was this mightie god of Love
In silke embroidid, full of grenè greves,
In whiche there was a fret of red rose leves,
The freshift sens the worlde was first begon;
His gilt here was ycrounid with a son
In stede of gold, for hevinessè and weight,
Therwith me thought his face shone so bright
That well unnethis might I him behold,
And in his hand methought I sawe him hold



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LEGENDE OF GOOD WOM

Hero, Dido, Laodomia', ifere,
And Phyllis, hanging for Demophoo.
And Canace, espyd by thy chere,
Hyppipyle, betrayid by Jafon,
Makith of your trouth neithir bosle ne
Nor Hypermnestra' or Ariadne, ye twa
My ladie cometh, that all this maie dist

This balade maie full well isongin be,
As I have said erst, by my ladie fre,
For certainly all these mowe not suffice
To' apperin with my ladie in no wise,
For as the sunnè woll the fire distain,
So passith all my ladie soverain,
That is so gode, so faire, so debonaire,
I prais to God that evir fall her faire!
For ne had comfort ben of her presence
I had ben dedde without any defence
For drede of Lov's wordis and his chere,
As whan time is hereaftir ye shall here.

Behinde this god of Love upon the grene
I sawe coming of ladyis ninetene,
In roiall habit, a full esle pace,
And aftir them of women soche a trace
That fens that God Adam had made of yert
he thirde part of mankinde, or the fers,th,
: wende I nat by possibilite
d evir in this widè worlde ibe,

LEGENDE OF GOOD WOMEN.

290

of love these women were echon:
 nether was that a wondir thing or non,
 ght anon as that thei gonne espie
 oure whiche that I clepe the Daisie,
 dainly thei stantin all at ones,
 anelid doune as it were for the nones,
 fongin with o voice, *Hele and honour*

293

ruth of womanbede, and to this flour,
 it berith our aldir prife in figuring,
 r white coroune berith the witnesing?
 id with that worde a compas environ

300

hei sittin 'hem full softly adoun:
 irst sat the god of Love, and sith his quene,
 With the white coroune, yclad all in grene,
 And sithin all the remnaunt by and by,

303

As thei were of estate, full curtisly;
 Ne nat a worde was spokin in the place
 The mounenance of a furlong waie of space.

2

I kneling by this flour in gode entent
 Abode to knowin what this peple ment
 As still as any stone, till at the last
 This god of Love on me his eyin cast,
 And said, Who knelich there? and I answerd
 Unto his asking whan that I it herde,
 And saied, Sir, I am I, and come him nere,
 And salued him. (Quod he) What doest thou t
 So nigh mine ownè flour so boldily?
 It werin bettir worthy truily.

A worme to nighin nere my flour than thou.

And why, Sir, (quod I) and it likith you?

For thou (quod he) art therto nothing able; 320

It is my relike digae and delitable,

And thou my fo, and all my folke werriest,

And of mine old servauntis thou misfaiest,

And hindrist 'hem with thy translacon,

And lettist folke from ther devocion 325

To servin me, and holdist it folie

To servin Love; thou maiest it nat denie,

For in plain text, withoutin nede of glose,

Thou' hast translatid The Romaunt of the Rose,

That is an hereisie ayenst my lawe, 330

And makist wise folke fro me to withdrawe;

And of Creseide thou hast faide as the list,

That makith men to women lesse to trisse,

That ben as trewe as er was any slec:

Of thine answere avisin the right wele, 335

For though that thou renyid hast my lawe,

As othir wretchis have done many' a daie,

By Seint Venus, which that my mothir is,

If that thou live thou shalt repent in this

So cruilly that it shal wel be sene. 340

Tho spake this lady, clothid all in grene,

And sayid, God, right of your curtisie

Ye mote herkin if that he can replie

Ayenst al this that ye have to him moved;

A God ne shoulde nat be thus agreved, 345

But of his deite he shal be stable,
 And thet to gracious and merciabie,
 And if ye n'ere a god that knowin all
 Than might it be, as I you tellin shall,
 This man to you maie falsely ben accused,
 That as by right him oughtin ben excused,
 For in your court is many' a losingeour,
 And many a queint totoler accusour
 That tabouren in your eris many' a foun
 Right astir ther imaginacioun,
 To have your daliaunce, and for envy;
 These ben the causis, and, I shal nat lie,
 Envie is lave'ndir of the court alwaie,
 For she ne partith neithir night ne daie
 Out of the house of Cæsar, thus saith Dant,
 Who so that goeth algate she wol nat want.

And eke peraunter for this man is nice
 He nightin done it, gessing no malice,
 But for he usith thingis for to make
 Him reckith nought of what matir he take,
 Or him was bodin makin thilkè twey
 Of some persone, and durst it nat withfey,
 Or him repentith uttirly of this,
 He ne' hath nat done so grevoussly amis
 To translatin that oldè clerkis writen,
 As though that he of malice would enditen
 Dispite of Love, and had himselfe it wrought;
 This shoud a rightwifè lorde have in his thought,

And nat be like tirauntes of Lombardie,
 That han no rewarde but at tirannie; 375
 For he that king or lorde is naturel,
 Him ought not be a tiraunt ne cruel
 As a fermour, to done the harme he can,
 He must thinkin it is his liegè man,
 As is his trefour, and his golde in cofer, 380
 This is the sentence of the filosofpher;
 A kinge to kepe his liegis in justice,
 Withoutin doute that is his office,
 Al wol he kepe his lordes in ther degre,
 As it is right and skil that thei shulde be 385
 Enhaunfid and honourid, and most dere,
 For thei ben halfegoddis in this world here,
 Yet mote he done both right to pore and riche,
 Al be that ther estate be nagh both liche,
 And have of povir folke compassion; 390
 For lo the gentil kinds of the lien!
 For whan a flec offendith him or biteth
 He with his taile awaie the flec ysmiteth
 Al esily, for of his gentèrie
 Him deinith nat to wreke him on a flec, 395
 As doeth a curre or els anothir best;
 In noble corage ought to ben arest,
 And wayin every thing by equite,
 And have regarde unto his owne degre;
 For, Sir, it is no maistrise for a lorde 400
 To dampne a man without answere of word,

LEGENDE OF GOOD WOMEN.

a lorde that is ful foule to use;
 so he he misie him nat excuse,
 with mercy with a dredeful herte,
 rofrith him right in his bare sherte 405
 in right at your owne jugement,
 ought a god by short avisement
 sidre' his owne honour and his trespase,
 with no cause of deth lieth in this case 410
 ought to ben the lightlier merciable;
 with your ire, and beth somewhat trefable;
 he man hath servid you of his conninges,
 and forthrid well your law in his makinges;
 Al be it that he can nat wel endite, 415
 Yet hath he madin leude folke delite
 To servin you, in preising of your name;
 He made the boke that hight The Housse of Fame,
 And eke The Deth of Blanchè the Duchesse,
 And The' Parliament of Foulis, as I gesse, 420
 And al The Love of Palamon and Arcite
 Of Thebis, though the storie is knowne lite,
 And many an hymne for your holy daies,
 That hightin Balades, Rondils, Virelaies;
 And for to speke of othir holinesse,
 He hath in prose translatid Boece,
 And made The Life also of Saint Cecile,
 He madin also, gon is a grete while,
 Origines upon the Maudelaine,
 Him oughtin now to have the lese paine;
 4

He hath made many' a ley and many' a thing. 430

Now as ye be a god and eke a king,
I your Alceste, whilom Queene of Thrace,
I askè you this man right of your grace
That ye him nevir hurte in al his live,
And he shal fwerin to you, and that blive, 435
He shal ner more agiltin in this wife,
But shal makin as ye wol him devise
Of women trewe in loving al their life,
Where so ye wol of maidin or of wife,
And forthrin you as muche as he misseide 440
Or in The Rose or ellis in Creseide.

The god of Love answerde her thus anon;
Madame, (quod he) it is so longe agon
'That I you knew so charitable' and trewe,
That nevir yet fithin the worlde was newe 445
To me ne founde I bettir none than ye;
If that I wol yfavin my degre
I may nor wol nat werne your request;
Al lieth in you; doth with him as you left.

I al foryeve withoutin lengir space, 450
For who so yeveth a yeste or doth a grace
Do it betime, his thanke shal be the more,
And demith ye what he shal do therefore.

Go, thankith now my lady here (quod he.)
I rose, and doun I fet me on my kne, 455
And sayid thus; Madame, the God above
For yelde you that ye the god of Love

Have makid me his wrathè to foryeve,
 And give me grace so longè for to live
 That I maie know sothily what ye be
 That have me holpen and put in this degre!
 But trewily I wende as in this caas
 Nought have agilte ne done to Love trespas;
 For why? a trewè man withoutin drede
 Hath nat to partin with a thev'is dede:

460

465

Ne a trewe lovir ought me not to blame
 Though that I speke a false lovir some shame,
 Thei oughtin rather with me for to holde
 For that I of Creseidè wrote or tolde,
 Or of the Rose; what so mine author ment
 Algatis God wote it was mine entent
 To forthrin trouth in love, and it chérice,
 And to ben ware fro falsenesse and fro vice,
 By whiche ensample this was my mening.

470

47

And she answerde, Let be thine arguing,
 For Love ne wol not countirpletid be
 In right ne wrong, and lerne that of me:
 Thou hast thy grace, and holde the right therto;
 Now woll I saine what penaunce thou shalt do
 For thy trespas: Understandith it here
 Thou shalt while that thou livist yere by yere
 The mostè partie of thy timè spende
 In making of a glorious Legende
 Of Gode Women, both maidinis and wives,
 That werin trewe in loving all ther lives.

LEGENDE OF GOOD WOMEN

and tellin of false men that hem betra
That al ther life ne do nat but assaien
How many women thei maie done a fl
For in your world that is nat holde a g
And though that the like nat a lovir be
Speke wel of love, this penaunce yeve
And to the god of Love I shal so praie
That he shal charge his servantes by a
To forthrin the, and wel thy labour qu
Go now thy waie, this penaunce is but
And when this boke is made yeve it th
On my behalfe, at Eltham or at Shene
The god of Love gan smile, and than I
Wost thou (quod he) wher this be wif
Or quene or countesse, or of what deg
That hath so litill penaunce yevin the,
That hast deservid forely for to smerte
But pite rennith sone in gentle herte,
That maist thou fene; she kithith wha

And I answerde, Naie, Sir, so have
No more but that I se wel she is gode.

That is a trewe tale by mine hode
(Quod Love) and that thou knowist w
If it be so that thou avise the:

Hast thou nat in a bokè in thy cheste
The gretè godenesse of the Quene Alc
That turnid was into a Däisie,
She that for her husbondè chese to die,

Have makid me his wrathè for foryeve,
 And give me grace so longè for to live
 That I maie know sothily what ye be 460
 That have me holpen and put in this degre!
 But trewily I wende as in this caas
 Nought have agilte ne done to Love trefpas;
 For why? a trewè man withoutin drede
 Hath nat to partin with a thev'is dede: 465

Ne a trewe lovir ought me not to blame
 Though that I speke a false lovir some shame,
 Thei oughtin rather with me for to holde
 For that I of Creseidè wrote or tolde,
 Or of the Rose; what so mine author ment 470
 Algis God wote it was mine entent
 To forthrin trowth in love, and it chesice.

And to ben ware fro falsenesse and fro vice,
 By whiche ensample this was my mening.

And she answerde, Let be this arguing. 475

For Love ne wol not amenable be

In right ne wrong, and he answerde her thus:

Thou hast thy saye, and I

Now wyl I seyn

For this

The

Th

And tellin of false men that 'hem betraien,
 That al ther life ne do nat but assaien
 How many women thei maie done a shame,
 For in your world that is nat holde a game;
 And though that the like nat a lovir be 490
 Speke wel of love, this penaunce yeve I the,
 And to the god of Love I shal so prait
 'That he shal charge his servantes by' any waie
 'To forthrin the, and wel thy labour quite;
 Go now thy waie, this penaunce is but lite; 495
 And when this boke is made yeve it the Quene
 On my behalfe, at Eltham or at Shene.
 The god of Love gan smile, and than he saide;
 Wost thou (quod he) wher this be wife or maide,
 Of quene or countesse, or of what degre, 500
 That hath so litill penaunce yevin the,

That hast deservid forely for to smerte?
 But pite rennith sone in gentle herte,
 That maist thou seyn which what she
 I answered, have I blynde
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And eke to gone to hell rather than he,
 And Hercules rescuid her parde,
 And brought her out of hel againe to blis? 515

And I answerde againe, and sayid, Yes;
 Now know I her; and is this gode Alceste,
 The Daiesie, and mine owne hert is restle?
 Now fele I wel the godenesse of this wise, 520

That both aftir her deth and in her life
 Her grette bounte doublich her renoun,
 Wel hath she quit me mine affectioun
 That I have to her flour the Daiesie;

No wondir is though Jove her stellifie,
 As tellith Agaton, for her godenesse,
 Her white corowne berith of it witnesse,
 For all so many virtuis had she 525

As smal florounis in her corowne be;
 In remembraunce of her and in honour
 Cybilla made the Daiesie, and the flour
 Icrownid al with white, as men maie fe, 530

And Mars yave her a corown red parde,
 In stede of rubies set among the white;

Therwith this quene woxe red for shame akie 535
 Whan she was praisid so in her presence.

Than sayid Love, A ful grette negligence

Was it to the, that ilkè time thou made

(*Hide, Absolon, thy tressis*) in balade,

That thou forgette her in thy songe to sette, 540

Siþ that thou art so grette in her dette,

And wotist wel that kalender is she
 To any woman that wol lovir be,
 For she taught all the crafte of trewe loving,
 And namily of wifehode the living, 545
 And all the bondis that she ought to kepe;
 Thy litil witte was thilkè time aslepe;
 But now I chargè the upon thy life
 That in thy Legende thou make of this wife,
 Whan thou hast othir finale made before; 550
 And fare now wel, I chargè the no more,
 But er I go this mucche I wol the tel,
 Ne shal no trewè lovir come in hel.

These othirladies sitting here arowe
 Ben in my balade, if thou couldest hem knowe, 555
 And in thy bokis al thou shalt hem finde,
 Have hem now in thy Legende al in minde,
 I mene of them that ben in thy knowing,
 For here ben twenty thousands mo sitting
 Than that thou knowist, and gode women al, 560
 And trewe of love, for ought that maie befall;
 Makith the metris of hem as the leste,
 I mote gone home, the sunnè drawith weste,
 To Paradis, with al this companie,
 And servin alwaie the fresh Dāisic: 565
 At Cleopatra' I wol that thou beginne,
 And so forthe, and my love so shalt thou winne;
 For let se now what man that lovir be
 Wel done so strong a paine for love as she.

And forthy to effeete than wol I skippé,
 And al the remnaunt I wol let it slippe.

Octavian, that wode was of this dede,
 Shope him an hoste on Antony to lede,
 Al uttirly for his distruction,
 With froute Romainis, cruil as lion:
 To ship thei went; and thus I let 'hem failen.

Antoniws was ware, and wol not faile
 To metin with these Romaines if he maie,
 Toke eke his rede, and both upon a dain
 His wife and he, and al his host, forth went
 To ship anone, no lengir theine stenty
 And in the se it happid 'hem to mete;
 Up goeth the trumpe, and for to shogte and thete,

And painiq 'hem to set on with the sonne;
 With grisly foune out goith the grete gonne,
 And hertily thei, hurtlin al at obes,
 And fro the top doune comith the grete stonies,
 In goth the grapinel so ful of crokes
 Among the ropis ran the shering hokes,

In with the polaxe presith he and he,
 Behinde the masse beginnith he to fle;
 And out againe, and drivith him or borde,
 He stickith him upon his sper's orde,
 He rent the saile with hokis like a fithc,
 He bringeth the cuppe, and biddith 'hem be blith,
 He pourith pefen upon the hatchis slider,
 With pottis ful of lime thei gon togider,

And thus the longè daie in fight thei spende,
 Til at the last, as every thing hath ende,
 Antonius is slent and put to flight,
 And al his folke to go that best go might;
 Fleeth eke the Quene, with al her purple saile, 75
 For strokis whiche that went as thicke as haile;
 No wondir was, she might it nat endure:
 And whan Antony sawe that aventure,
 Alas (quod he) the daie that I was borne
 My worship in this daie thus have I lorne, 80
 And for dispaire out of his witte he ferte;
 And rose himselfe anon throughout the herte
 Er that he ferthir went out of the place
 His wife, that could of Cæsar have no grace,
 To Egypt fled for drede and for distresse; 85
 But herkenith, ye that spekin of kindenesse:
 Ye men that falsely fwerin many' an othe
 That ye wol die if that your love be wrothe;
 Here maie ye sene of women such a routh
 This woful Cleopatre' had made suche routh 90
 That there n'is tongè none that maie it tel,
 But on the' morowe she wol no lengir dwel,
 But made her subtil werkmen make a shrine
 Of al the rubies and the stonis fine
 In al Egypt which that she coude espie, 95
 And she put ful the shrine of spicerie,
 And lette the corse enbaume, and forth she sette
 This ded corse, and she in the shrine it sette;

And forthy to effeete than wol I skippé,

And al the remnaunt I wol let it slippe,

Octavian, that wode was of this dede,

Shope him an hoste on Antony to lede,

Al uttirly for his distruction,

With froute Romainis, cruil as lioned and wyld,

To ship thei went; and thus I let 'hem faile.

Antonyus was ware, and wol not faile

To metin with these Romaines if he maie,

Toke eke his rede, and both upon a daie

His wife and he, and al his host, forth went,

To ship anone, no lengir theine stent;

And in the se it happid 'hem to mete;

Up gooth the trumpe, and for to shoute and shete,

And painin 'hem to set on with the sunne;

With grilly founne out gooth the grete goinne,

And hertily thei hurtlin al at ones,

And fro the top doune comith the grete stones,

In goth the grapinel so ful of crokes

Among the ropes ran the shering hokes,

In with the polaxe presith he and he,

Behinde the masse beginnith he to fle;

And out againe, and drivith him on borde,

He stickith him upon his sper's orde,

He rent the saile with hokis like a fithc,

He bringeth the cuppe, and biddith 'hem be blich

He pourith pefen upon the hatchis slider,

With pottis ful of lime thei gon togider,

And thus the longè daie in fight thei spende,
 Til at the last, as every thing hath ende,
 Antonius is shent and put to flight,
 And al his folke to go that best go might;
 Fleeth eke the Queene, with al her poble's saile; 75
 For strokis whiche that went as thicke as haile;
 No wondir was, she might it nat endure;
 And whan Antony sawe that aventure,
 Alas (quod he) the daie that I was borne to see,
 My worship in this daie thus have I lorne, 80
 And for dispaire out of his witte he sterre,
 And rose himselte anon throughout the herte
 Er that he ferthir went out of the place
 His wife, that could of Cæsar have no grace,
 To Egypt fled for drede and for distresse; 85
 But herkenich, ye that spekin of kindenesse.
 Ye men that falsely swerin many' an othe
 That ye wol die if that your love be wroche;
 Here maiè ye sene of women such a routh
 This woful Cleopatre' had made suche routh 90
 That there n'is tonge none that maiè it tel,
 But on the' morowe she wol no lengir dwel,
 But made her subtil werkmen make a shrine
 Of al the rubies and the stonis fine
 In al Egypt which that she coulde espie, 95
 And she put ful the shrine of spicerie,
 And lette the corse enbaume, and forth she sette
 This ded corse, and she in the shrine it sette;

And next the shrine a pit than doth she grave,
 And al the serpentis that she might have 100
 She put 'hem in that grave, and thus she seide;
 Now love, to whom my sorowful hert obeide
 So ferforthly, that fro that blisful hour
 That I you swore to ben al frely your,
 I mene you, Antonius, my knight, 105
 That nevir waking in the daie or night
 Ye n'ere out of mine hert's remembraunce,
 For wele or wo, for carole or for daunce,
 And in my selfe this covenant made I tho,
 That right fuche as ye feltin, wele or wo, 110
 As ferforth as it in my powir laie,
 Unreprovable' unto my wifchode aie,
 The same would I felin in life or dethe,
 And thilkè covenaut while me lastith brethe
 I wol fulfil, and that shal wel be sene, 115
 Was ner unto her love a trewir quene;
 And with that word nakid, with ful gode hert,
 Among the serpentis in the pitte she stert,
 And there she chese to have her burying:
 Anone the nedirs gonne her for to sting, 120
 And she her deth recevith with gode chere,
 For love of Antony that was her dere;
 And this is storial sothe, it is no fable.
 Now er I finde a man thus trewe and stable,
 And wol for love his deth so frely take,
 I praie God let our hedis nevir ake! 126

Here endeth the Legende of Cleopatra.

HERE FOLOWETH
THE LEGENDE OF THISBE.

OF BABYLONE.

At Babylonè whilom fil it thus,
The whiche toun the Quene Simiramus
Let dichin al about, and wallis make
Full hie of hardè tilis wel ibake :
There werin dwelling in this noble toun 5
Two lordis which that were of grete renoun,
And wonidin so nigh upon a grene
That there n'as but a stone wal 'hem bitwene,
As oftin in grete tounis is the wonne,
And, sothe to faine, that one man had a sonne 10
Of al that londe one of the lustyist,
That othir had a doughtir the fairist
'That eilward in the world was tho dwelling;
The name of everiche gan to othir spring,
By women that were neighbouris aboute, 15
For in that countre yet withoutin doute
Maidinis ben ikepte for jelousie
Ful straitely, lest thei diddin some folie.

This yongè man was clepid Pyramus,
And Thisbe hight the maide (Naso saith thus) 20
And thus by reporte was ther name ishove,
That as thei woze in age so woze ther love;
And certaine, as by reson of ther age,
Ther might have ben betwixt 'hem mariage,

But that ther fathirs n'olde it nat assent; 25
 And thei in love ylike fore bothè brent
 That none of al ther frendis might it lette,
 But privily somtimis yet thei mette
 By sleight, and spakin some of ther desire,
 As wrie the glede and hottir is the fire; 30
 Forbid a love and it' is ten times so wode.

This wal which that betwixt 'hem both ystode
 Was cloven atwo right fro the top adoun
 Of oldè time of his foundacioun,
 But yet this clifte was so narow and lite 35
 It was nat fend, (dere inough a mite)
 But what is that that love can not espie?
 Ye lovirs two, if that I shal nat lie,
 Ye foundin first this litle narowe clifte,
 And with a founde as softe as any shrifte 40
 Thei let ther wordis through the cliftè pace,
 And toldin, while that thei stoden in the place,
 Al ther complaint of love and al ther wo,
 At evèry time whan thei durstin so.

Upon that one side of the wal stode he, 45
 And on that other sidè stode Thisse,
 The swete founne of othir to receve,
 And thus ther wardeins wouldin thei disceve,
 And every daie this wal thei wouldin threte,
 And wish to God that it were down ibete; 50
 Thus would thei saine, Alas! thou wickid wal,
 Thorough thine envie thou us lettist al;

y n'ilt thou cleve or fallin al atwo?
 t the leftè, but thou wouldist so,
 wouldist thou but onis let us mete, 55
 onis that we mightin kissin swete,
 n were we curid of our caris colde;
 nathèlesse yet he we to the holde,
 i muche as thou suffrist for to gone
 wordis through thy lime and eke thy stone, 60
 oughtin we with the ben wel apaide.

nd whan these idil wordis werin saide
 coldè wal thei woldin kisse of stone,
 take ther leve, and forth thei woldin gone,
 this was gladly in the evintide, 65
 vondir erly, lest men it espide :
 longè time thei wrought in this manere,
 on a daie, whan Phœbus gan to clere,
 ora with the firemis of her hete
 dryid up the dewe of herbis wete, 70
 o this clifte, as it was wonte to be,
 ie Pyramus, and astir come Thisbe,
 plightin trouth right fully in ther faie,
 t ilkè samè night to stele awaie,
 to begile ther wardeins everichone, 75
 forth out of the cite for to gone;
 for the feldis ben so brode and wide
 o metin in a place at o tide
 settin markes ther metingis should be
 c King Ninus was graven undir a tre, 80

For olde Painims, that idollis heried,
 Usdin tho in feldis to ben beried;
 And faste by his grave was a wel,
 And shortly of this tale for to tel,
 This covenant was affirmid wondir fast, 85
 And longe 'hem thoughtin that the founne last,
 That it n'ere gone undir the se adoun.
 This Thisbe hath so grete affectioun;
 And so grete liking Pyramus to se,
 That whan she sawe her time might ybe 90
 At night she stalle awaie ful privily,
 With her face iwimplid full subtilly,
 For al her frendis (for to save her trouthe)
 She hath forsake, alas! and that is routhe,
 That evir woman would ybe so trewe 95
 To trustin man but she the bet him knewe;
 And to the tre she goeth a ful gode pace,
 For love made her so hardy in this case,
 And by the wellc adoun she gan her dresse.
 Alas! than comith a wilde lionesse 100
 Out of the wode, withoutin more arest,
 With blode mouthie of strangling of a best,
 To drinkin of the wel there as she sat;
 And whan that Thisbe had espyid that
 She rist her up with a ful dreery herte, 105
 And in a cave with dredful fote she sterte,
 For by the mone she sawe it wel withall,
 And as she ran her wimple let she fall,

And toke none hede, so fore she was awshaped,
 And eke so glad for that she was escaped; 110
 And thus she sat and lurkith wondir still.
 Whan that this lionesse hath dronke her fill
 Aboutin the well gan she for to winde,
 And right anon the wimple gan she finde,
 And with her bloody mouthe it al to rente; 115
 Whan this was done no lengir she ne stente,
 But to the wode her way than hath she nome.

And at the last this Pyramus is come,
 But al to longe, alas! at home was he;
 The monè shone, men mightin wel ife; 120
 And in his waie, as that he come ful fast,
 His eyin to the grounde adoun he cast,
 And in the sonde, as he behelde adoun,
 He saw the steppis brode of a lioun,
 And in his hert he sodainly agrose, 125
 And pale he went, therwith his hert aroste,
 And nere he came, and founde the wimple torne;
 Alas (quod he) the daie that I was borne!
 This o night wol both us loviris fle;
 How should I askin mercy of Thisbe 130
 Whan I am he that have you slaine? alas!
 My biding hath you slainè in this caas:
 Alas! to bidde a woman gone by night
 In place there as perill fallin might,
 And I so slowe: alas! I ne had be 135
 Here in this place a furlonge waie crye.

Now what lioun that is in this forest
 My body mote he rentin, or what best
 That wilde is, gnawin mote he now mine herte.
 And with that worde he to the wimple sterter, 140
 And kiste it ofte, and wepte on it ful fore,
 And said, Wimple, alas! there n'is no more,
 But thou shalt fele as wel the blode of me
 As thou hast felte the bleding of Thisbe:
 And with that worde he smote him to the herte, 145
 The blode out of the wounde as brode asferte
 As watir, whan the conduite brokin is,
 Now Thisbe, which that ne wist not of this,
 But sitting in her drede she thoughte thus,
 Yf it so fallin that my Pyramus 150
 Be comen hithir, and may me nat ifinde,
 He maie me holdin false and eke unkinde.

And out she cometh, and aftir him gan spien
 Both with her herte and eke with her eien,
 And thought: I wol him tellin of my drede 155
 Both of the lionesse and of my dede;
 And at the last her love than hath she founde
 Ybeting with his helis on the grounde
 Al bloody', and therwithal abacke she sterter,
 And like the wawis quappe began her herte, 160
 And pale as boxe she woxe, and in a throwe
 Avisid her, and gan him wel to knowe,
 That it was Pyramus, her herte cere:
 O! who could writin whiche a dedly chere

Hath Thisbe now! and how her here she rent, 165
 And how she gan her-felſin to turment,
 And how ſhe lieth and ſwounith on the ground,
 And how ſhe wept of teris ful his wounde,
 How medliſh ſhe his blode with her complaint,
 How with her blod her ſelvin gan the paine, 170
 How clippith ſhe the red ded corſe; alas! how ſad
 How doth this woful Thisbe in this caſe,
 How kiſſith ſhe his ſoſty mouthe ſo cold & ſhivering
 Who hath don this? and who hath be a ſo bolden
 To ſleen my life ſo! I ſpeke my Pyramus, 175
 I am thy Thisbe that the callith thus; and ſith
 And therewithal ſhe liſt up his bod & did not be ſo ſad
 This wofull man, that was nat full ſad,
 Whan that he herde the name of Thisbe cryen,
 On her, he caſt his hevy dedly even, 180
 And down againe, and yeldith up the goſt
 Thisbe riſt up withoutin noiſe or boiſe
 And ſaw her wimple and his empty ſheath
 And eke his ſwerde; that him hath don to deth,
 Than ſpake ſhe thus: My woful hande (quod ſhe)
 Is ſtronger inough in ſuche a werke to me, 186
 For love ſhal yeve me ſtrength and hardiſſe
 To make my wounde large inough to geſſe
 I wol the ſolowen ded; and I wol be
 Felawe and cauſe eke of thy deth, (quod ſhe) 190
 And though that nothing ſave the deth only
 Might the fro me departin trewily,

Thou shalt no more departin now fro me
 Than fro the deth, for I wol go with the.

And now, ye wretchid jelouse fathirs our, 193
 We that ywerin whilom childrin your,
 We prayin you withoutin more envie
 That in o grave we both motin lie,
 Sens love hath brought us to this pitous ende:
 And rightwise God to every lovir sende, 200
 That lovith trewly, more prosperite
 Than evir had Pyramus and Thisbe,

And let no gentil woman her assure
 To puttin her in soche an avieture:
 But God forbid but that a woman can 205
 Ben as true and as loving as a man,
 And for my part I shal anon it kith;
 And with that word his sward she tokè swith,
 That warme was of her lov'is blode and hote,
 And to the hertè she her selvin smote, 210

And thus are Thisbe' and Pyramus ago:
 Of trewè men I findin but fewe mo
 In al my bokis save this Pyramus,
 And therfore have I spokin of him thus,
 For it is deinte to us men to finde 215
 A man that can in love be trewe and kinde.

Here maie ye sene, what lovir so he be,
 A woman dare and can as wel as he. 218

Here endeth the Legende of Thisbe of Babylone.

HERE FOLOWETH
THE LEGENDE OF DIDO

QUEENE OF CARTHAGE.

GLORIE and honour, Virgile Mantuan,
Be to thy name, and I shal as I can
Folowe thy lanterne as thou goest biforne,
How Æneas to Dido was forsworne
In thine Æneide, and Naso wol I take 5
The tenour and the gret effectis make.
Whan Troie ybrought was to destruction
By Grekis sleight, and namely by Sinon
Faining the horse offrid unto Minerve,
Through which that many a Trojan must sterue, 10
And Hector had astir his deth apered,
And fire so wode that it might nat ben stered,
In al the noble toure of Ilion,
That of the cite was the chefe dongeon,
And al the countre was so lowe ibrought, 15
And Priamus the king fordone and nought,
And Æneas was chargid by Venus
To flien awaie, he toke Ascanius,
That was his son, in his right hande and fledde,
And on his backe he bare and with him ledde 20
His oldè fathir clepid Anchises,
And by the waie his wife Creusa he lese;
And mokol sorow had he in his minde
Er that he could his felawship yfnde,

But at the last, when he had 'hem yfounde,
He made 'hem redy in a certaine stounde,
And to the se ful fast he gan him hie,
And sailith forth with al his companie
Towards Itaile, as wold Destine:
But of his aventuris in the fe
N'is nat to purpose for to speke of here;
For it accordith nat to my matere;
But as I said, of him and of Dido
Shal be my tale til that I have do.

So longe he sailid in the saltè se
Til in Libye unneth arrivid he
With shippis sevin, and no more navie,
And glad he was to londè for to hie,
So was he with the tempest al to shake;
And whan that he the havin had itake
He had a knight was callid Achates,
And him of all his felowship he chese
To gone with him the countre for t'espie,
He ne toke with him no more companie,
But forthe thei gon, and left his shippis ride,
His fere and he, withoutin any guide.

So long he walkith in this wildirnesse
Till at the last he met an huntireffe;
A bowe in honde and arowis had she,
Her clothis cuttid were unto the kne,
But she was yet the fairist creature
That evir was iformid by Nature,

And Æneas and Achates she grette,
 And thus she to 'hem spake whan she 'hem met :
 Sawe ye; (quod she) as ye han walkid wide, 55
 Any of my fustrin walke you beside,
 With any wildè bore or othir best,
 That thei have huntid to in this forest,
 Ituckid up, with arowes in ther caas?
 Naie, sothly, ladie, (quod this Æneas) 60
 But by thy beaute, as it thinkith me,
 Thou mightist nevir yerthly woman be,
 But Phœbus fustir art thou as I gesse,
 And if so be that thou be a goddesse
 Have mercie on our labour and our wo. 65
 I n'am no goddesse sothly, quod she tho,
 For maidins walkin in this countre here
 With arowes and with bow in this manere;
 This is the relme of Libye there ye ben,
 Of whiche that Dido ladie is and quene; 70
 And shortly tolde all the occasion
 Why Dido came into that region,
 Of whiche as now me listith nat to rhimé;
 It nedith nat; it n'ere but losse of time;
 For this is all and some, it was Venus, 75
 His ownè mothir, that spake with him thus;
 And to Cârthage she bade he should him sight,
 And vanishid anon out of his sight.
 I could folowin worde for worde Virgile,

This noble Quene, that clepid was Dido,
 That whilom was the wife of Sichæo,
 That fairir was by ferr than the bright sonne,
 This noble toun of Carthage hath begonne,
 In whiche she reignith in so grete honour 85
 That she was holdin of all quenis flour
 Of gentilleffe, of fredome, and beaute,
 That well was him that might her onis se,
 Of kingis and of lordis so desired,
 That all the worlde her beaute had ifired, 90
 She stode so well in every wight's grace.

Whan Æneas was come unto the place,
 Unto the maistir temple' of all the toun,
 There Dido was in her devocioun,
 Full privily his waie than hath he nome: 95
 Whan he was into the large temple come
 I can not faine if that it be possible,
 But Venus had him makid invisable,
 Thus saith the boke, withoutin any lese.

And whan this Æneas and Achates 100
 Haddin in this temple ben ovir all,
 Than foundin thei depaintid on a wall
 How Troie and all the lande distroyid was;
 Alas that I was borne! (quod Æneas)
 Thorough the world our shame is kid so wide, 105
 Now it is paintid upon every side:
 All we that werin in prosperite
 Ben now disclaundrid, and in soche degre,

No lengix for to livin I ne kepe;
And with that word he braft out for to wepe 110
So tendirly that routh it was to sene,

This freshe ladie, of the cite Quene,
Stode in the temple in her estate roiall,
So richily and eke so faire withall,
So yong, so lustle, with her eyin glade, 115

That if that God that hevin and yerth made
Would have a love, for beaute and godenesse,
And womanhede, and trouth and femelineffe,
Whom should he lovyn but this ladie swete?
'There n'is no woman to him, half so mete. 120

Fortune, that hath the world in govirnaunce,
Hath sodaintly brought in so newe a chaunce
That nevyr was there yet so frened a caas,
For all the companie of Æneas,
Which that we wenid have lorne in the se, 125

Arivid is nought ferre fro that cite,
For whiche the gretist of his lordis some
By avinture ben to the cite come,
Unto that same temple for to seke.
The Quene, and of her socour her beseke, 130
Soche renome was ther sprong of her godenes.

And whan that thei had tolde all ther distres,
And all ther tempest and all ther hard case,
Unto the Quene apperid Æneas,
And opiny beknewe that it was he; 135
Who haddin joie than but his meine,

That haddin found ther lorde, ther govirnour?

The Quene saw that thei did him soche honou
And had herd oft of Æneas er tho,
And in her hertè she had routhe and wo
That evir soche a noble man as he
Shall ben disheritid in soche degre,
And sawe the man that he was like a knight,
And suffisaunt of persone and of might,
And like to ben a very gentilman,
And well his wordis he besettin can,
And had a noble visage for the nones,
And formid well of brawne and eke of bones,
And astir Venus had soche fairènèssè
That no man might be halfe so faire I gesse,
And well a lorde him semid for to be;

And for he was a straungir, somewhat she
Ylikid him the bet, as God doe bote,
To some folk oft in newè thing is fote;
Anon her herte hath pite of his wo,
And with that pite love ycame also;
And thus for pite and for gentilnèssè
Refreshid must he ben of his distresse.

She sayid certis that she sorie was
That he hath had soche perill and soche caas,
And in her frendly speche in this manere
She to him spake, and saied as ye maie here:
Be ye nat Venus sonne and Anchises?
In gode faith all the worship and encrese-

That I maie godely doen you ye shall have; 165

Your shippis and your meinë shall I save:

And many' a gentill worde she spake him to,

And commaundid her messangirs to go

The samè daie withoutin any faile

His shippis for to seke and 'hem vitaile :

170

Full many' a best she to the shippis sent,

And with the wine she gan 'hem to present,

And to her roiall paleis she her spedde,

And Æneas alwaie with her she ledde.

What nedith you the festis to discrive?

175

He nevir bet at ese was in his live;

Full was the fest of deinties and richeffe,

Of instrumentes, of song, and of gladnesse,

And many' an amo'rous loking and devise.

This Æneas is come to paradise

180

Out of the swolowe' of hell, and thus in joie

Remembrith him of his estate in Troie.

To daunſing chambris full of paramentes,

Of richè beddis and of ornamentes,

This Æneas is ledde aftir the mete;

185

And with the Quene whan that he had yſete,

And spicis partid, and the wine agon,

Unto his chambir was he lad anon

To take his ese and for to have his rest,

With all his folke to doen what so 'hem left.

190

There ne was courſir well ibridlid none,

Ne ſtedè for the juſting well to gone,

Ne largè paulfrey eſſe for the nones,
 Ne jewill yfret full of richè ſtones,
 Ne ſackis full of gold, of largè wight, 195
 Ne rubie none that ſhiniſh bright by night,
 Ne gentill hautin faukon heronere,
 Ne hounde for harte, or wildè bore, or dere,
 Ne cuppe of gold, wiſh florèins newe ibette,
 That in the londe of Libye maie ben gette 200
 That Dido ne' hath Æneas it iſent,
 And all is payid what that he hath ſpent.
 Thus can this worthy Quene her geſtis call,

As ſhe that can in fredome paſſin.all.

Æneas ſothely eke, withoutin leſe, 205
 Hath ſent to his ſhippis by Achates
 Aſtir his ſonne, and aſtir richè thinges,
 Both ſceptre, clothis, brochis, and eke ringes,
 Some for to were, and ſome for to preſent
 To her that all theſe noble thinges him ſent; 210
 And bad his ſonne how that he ſhould ymake
 The preſenting, and to the Quene it take.

Repairid is this Achates again,
 And Æneas full bliſfull is and fain
 To ſein his yonge ſonne Aſcanius, 215
 For unto him it was reportid thus,
 That Cupido, that is the god of Love,
 At prayir of his mothir hic above,
 Yhad the likenefſe of the childe itake,
 This noble Quene enamoured ſer to make 220

On Æneas; but as to that scripture,
 Be as he maie; I make of it no cure;
 But soth is this, the Quene hath made soch chere
 Unto this childe that wondir was to here,
 And of the present that his fathir sent 225
 She thankid him full oft in gode entent.
 Thus is this Quene in plessaunce and in ioie
 With all these newe lustie folke of Troie,
 And of the dedis hath she more enquerd
 Of Æneas, and all the storie lered 230
 Of Troie, and all the loonge daie thei twais
 Entendidin for to speke and to plaie,
 Of whiche there gan to breidin soche a fire,
 That felie Dido hath now soche desire
 With Æneas her newe gest to dele 235
 That she hath lost her hewe and eke her hele.
 Now to the effect, now to the fruite, of all
 Why I have told this storie and tellin shall.
 Thus I beginne. It fell upon a night,
 Whan that the mone upreisd had her light, 240
 This noble Quene unto her rest ywent,
 She sighid sore, and gon her self tourment,
 She walkith, waloweth, and made many braied,
 As doen these lovira, as I have herd saied,
 And at the laste unto her sustir Anne 245
 She made her mone, and right thus spake she than:
 Now, derè sustir mine! what maie it be
 That me agastith in my dreame? (quod she)

This ilke newe Trojan is so in my thought,
 For that me thinketh he is so well iwrought; 250
 And eke so likely for to ben a man,
 And therwithall so mikill gode he can,
 That all my love and life lieth in his cure;
 Have ye nat herd him tell his avinture?

Now certis, Anne, if that ye rede me, 255
 I woldin fain to him iweddid be:
 This is the effect; what should I more seine?
 In him lieth all to doe me live or deine.

Her fustir Anne, as she that could her gode, 260
 Said as her thought, and somdele it withstode;
 But hereof was so long a sermoning
 It were to long to makin reherfing;
 But finally, it maie not be withstonde,
 Love wold ylove, for no wight wold it wonde.
 The dawning uprist out of the salte fe, 265
 This amorous Quene chargith her maine

The nettis dresse, and speris brode and kent,
 An hunting wold this lustie freshe Quene;
 So prickith her this newe jolic we;
 To horse is all her lustie folke igo, 270
 Unto the court the houndis ben ibrought,
 And upon coursir swift as any thought
 Her yongè knightis hevin all about,
 And of her women eke an hugè rout:
 Upon a thicke palfraie, papirwhite, 275
 With sadill redde, enbroudid with delite,

Of golde the barres, up enbossid high,
 Sate Dido, all in golde and perreywigh,
 And she is faire as is the brightè morowe,
 That helith sick folk is of night, is forowen,
 Upon a coursir startling as the fire,
 Men mightin tourne him with a little wife.

But Æneas, like Phœbus to deviso,
 So was he fresh arrayid in his wise;
 The somie bridill, with the bitte of gold,
 Govirnith he right as himself hath would;
 And forthè this noble Quene, this ladie, hiden
 On hunting, with this Trojan by her side,
 The herde of hartis foundin is anon,
 With Hey go bet, pricke thou, let gon, let gon;
 Why n'il the lion comin or the bere,
 That I might him ones metin with this pere?
 Thus fain this yongè folke, and up thei kill,
 The wilde hartis, and have 'hem at ther will.

Emong all this to romblin gan the heven,
 The thondir rorid with a grisly steven,
 Doune come the rain, with haile and flet so fast,
 With hevin's fire, that made so fore agast;
 This noble Quene and also her meinè,
 That eche of 'hem was glad awaie to fle;
 And, shortly, fro the tempest her to save,
 She fled her self into a little cave,
 And with her went this Æneas also,
 I n'ot with 'hem if ther went any mo.

The auctour makith of it no mencion; 305
And here began the depe affection
Bitwixt 'hem two; this was the firste morowe
Of her gladnesse and ginning of her sorowe,
For there hath Æneas iknelid so,
And tolde her all his hert and all his wo, 310
And sworne so depè to her to be true
For well or wo, and chaungin for no newe,
And as a false lovir so well can plain,
That felie Dido rewid on his pain,
Toke him for husband, and became his wife 315
For evirmore, while that 'hem last shulde life;
And aftir this, whan that the tempest stente,
With mirth out as thei came homeward thei went;
The wickid fame uprofe, and that anon,
How Æneas hath with the Quene igon 320
Into the cave, and demid as 'hem list;
And whan the King (that Yarbass hight) it wist,
As he that had her loved evir his life,
And wowid her to havin to his wife,
Soche sorow' as he hath makid and soche chere 325
It is a routhe and pite for to here;
But as in love all daie it happith so
That one shall laughin at an othir's wo,
Now laughith Æneas, and is in joie
And more richesse than evir was in Troie. 330
O felie woman, full of innocence,
Full of pite, of truthe, and continence!

What makid you to men to trustin' so?
 Have ye soche routhe upon ther fainid wo
 And have soche old ensamplis you beforne? 335
 Se ye nat all how that thei ben forsworne?
 Where se ye one that he ne' hath lasfe his lefe,
 Or ben unkinde, or doen her some mischefe,
 Or pillid her, or hostid of his dede?
 Ye maie as we'll it sene as ye maie rede. 340
 Takith hede now of this grete gentilman,
 'This Trojan, that so well her plesin can,
 That fainith him so true and obeifing,
 So gentill and so privie' of his doing,
 And can so well doen all his obeisaunce, 345
 And waitith her at festis and at daunce,
 And whan she goeth to temple' and home again,
 And fastin till he hath his ladie seia,
 And berin in his devisis for her sake
 N'et I nat what, and songis would he make, 350
 Justin, and doen of armis many thinges,
 Sende her lettirs, tokins, brochis, and ringes.
 Now hierkenith how he shal his lady serve;
 There as he was in perill for to sterve
 For hungir and for mischefe in the se, 355
 And desolate, and fledde fro his countre,
 And all his folke with tempest all to driven,
 She hath her body and eke her relme yeven
 Into his honde, there as she might have ben
 Of othir lande than of Carthage a quene, 360

And lived in ioy inough; what would ye more?
 This *Æneas*, that hath thus depe ifwere,

Is werie of his craft within a throwe,
 And the hote earnest is all ovisblowe,
 And prively he doeth his shippis dight,
 And shapith him to stele awaie by night.

365

This Dido hath suspencion of this,
 And thoughtin well that it was all amis,
 For in his bedde he lieth anight and siketh;
 She askith him anon, What the misliketh,
 My derè herte! whiche that I lovin meste?

370

Certis (quod he) this night my fathir's ghoſte
 Hath in my slepe me so sorely tourmented,
 And eke *Mercurie*' his message hath presented,
 That nedis to the conquest of Itaile

375

My destinie is sonè for to faile,
 For which me thinkith brostin is mine hert;
 Therwith his falsè teris out thei stert,
 And takith her within his armis two.

Is that in earnest? (quod she) woll ye so?
 Have ye not sworne to wife me for to take?
 Alas! what woman woll ye of me make?

I am a gentill woman and a quene,
 Ye woll not fro your wife thus foul yfene?
 That I was borne alas! what shall I do?

To telle in short, this noble Quene Dido
 She sekith halowes and doeth sacrifice,
 She knclith, crieth, that routh is to devise,

Conjurith him, and profe'rith him to be
 His thrall, his servaunt, in the best degre, 390
 She fallith him to fote, and sownith there,
 Dischevilid with her bright gildid here,
 And saieth, Have mercy ! let me with you ride,
 These lordis whiche that wonnain me beside
 Woll me destroyin onely for your sake; 395
 And if ye wolle me now to wife ytake,
 As ye have sworne, than woll I yeve you leve
 To slaen me with your swerde now sone at eve,
 For than yet shall I dyin as your wife;
 I am with childe, and yeve my childe his life : 400
 O mercie, Lorde! have pite in your thought.
 But all this thing availith her right nought,
 For on a night he sleping let her lie,
 And stole awaye into his company,
 And as a traitour forthe he gan to saile 405
 Towards the large countre of Itaile;
 And thus hath he left Dido' in we and pine,
 And weddid there a ladie hight Lavine.
 A clothe he left, and eke his sworde standing,
 Whan he fro Dido stale in her sleping, 410
 Right at her bedd'is hedde, so gan he hie
 Whan that he stale awaie to his navie.

Which cloth whan felie Dido gan awake ,
 She hath it kiste ful oftin for his sake,
 And said, Swete cloth ! while Jupiter it left 415
 Take my soule, unbinde me of this unrest,

I have fulfilled of Fortune all the course:
 And thus, alas! withoutin his socourse
 Twentie tymis if woundid hath she than.
 And whan that she unto her sustir Anne 410
 Complained had of which I maie not write,
 So grete routh I have it for to endite,
 And bad her norice and her sustir gon
 To fetchin fire and othir things anon,
 And sayid that she wouldè sacrifice; 415
 And whan she might her timè well aspie
 Upon the fire of sacrifice she sterte,
 And with his swardè she rose her to the herte.

But as mine auctour saith yet this she seide,
 Or she was hurtin, beforne or she deide, 430
 She wrote at lettre' anon, and thus began:

Right so (quod she) as the milkwhite swan
 Ayenst his deth beginnith for to sing,
 Right so to you I make my complaining,
 Not that I trowe to gettin you again, 435
 For well I wote that it is al in vain,
 Sens that the goddes ben contrarious to me,
 But sin my name is lost through you (quod she)
 I maie well lese a worde on you or letter,
 All be it I shall be nevir the better, 440
 For thilkè wind that blewe your ship awaie.
 The samè winde hath blowe awaie your faie:
 But who so wol al this lettre' have in minde
 Rede Ovide, and in him he shall it finde. 444

Thus endeth the Legende of Dido Quene of Carthage.

HERE FOLOWETH THE LEGENDE OF
HYPsipYLE AND MEDEA.

how rote of false Iovris, Duke Jason,
 how sleer, devourir, and confusion,
 gentill women, gentil creatures,
 how madist thy reclaiming and thy lures
 ladies of thy scathliche aparannce, 5
 id of thy wordis falsid with plesaunce,
 id of thy fainid trouth and thy manere,
 ith thine obeissaunce and humble chere,
 id with thine counterfeited pain and wo,
 ere othir falsin one thou falsid two. 10
 oftin swore thou that thou wouldist die
 : love whan thou ne feltist maladie
 re foule delite, whiche that thou callist love :
 hat I live thy name shall be yshove
 Englishe, that thy deceipt shall be knowe : 15
 ve at the, Jason ; now thin horn is blow.
 t certis it is bothè routh and wo
 at Love with false Iovris werkith so,
 thei shal have well bettir love and chere
 an he that hath aboughtin love full dere, 20
 had in armis many' a bloodie boxe,
 ay as tendre' a capon eteth the fox,
 ough he be fals, and hath the foule betraied,
 shall the gode man that therefore hath paid ;

Although he have to the' capon skill and right 25
 The false foxe woll have his part at night :
 On Jafon this enfample' is well ifene
 By Hypsipyle' and Medea the quene.

In Theffalie, as Ovide tellith us,
 There was a knight that hightin Peleus, 30
 That had a brothir whiche that hight Æfon;
 And whan for age he might unnethis gon
 He yave to Peleus the govirning
 Of all his reigne, and made him lorde and king ;
 Of whiche Æfon this Jafon gettin was, 35
 That in his time in all that land there n'as

Nat soche a famous knight of gentillesse,
 Of fredome, of strengthe, and of lustinesse,
 Astir his fathir's deth he bare him so
 That there n'as none that list to ben his foe, 40
 But did him all honour and companie,
 Of whiche this Peleus hath grete envie,
 Imagining that Jafon might ybe
 Enhaunfid so, and put in soche degre, -
 With love of lordis of his regioun, 45
 'That from his reigne he maie be put adoun,
 And in his wit anight compaffid he
 How this Jafon might best distroyid be,
 Withoutin sclaudir of his compasment ;
 And at the last he toke avifement 50
 'That to sende him into some ferre countre,
 'Theras this Jafon maie distroyid be :

This was his wit, all made he to Jason
 Grete chere of loke and of affection,
 For drede lest that his lordis it espide. 55
 And so bifell it, as fawme ronnith wide,
 There was soche tiding or all, and soche loos,
 That in an isle that callid was Colchos,
 That stonte beyonde Troie estward in the se,
 There was a Ram which that men mightin se 60
 That had a Flees of Golde that shone so bright
 That no where was there soche an othir sight;
 But it was kept alwaie with a dragoun,
 And many othir marvailles up and doun,
 And with two bullis makid all of bras, 65
 That spittin fire, and mochil thing ther was;
 But this was eke the talè nathèles,
 That who so would ywinnin thilkè Flees
 He must bothe, or that he it wynnin might,
 With the bullis and with the dragon fight. 70
 And King Oëtus lorde was of that ile.
 This Peleus bethought upon this while
 That he his nevewe Jason would exhort
 To sailin to that londe him to disport,
 And sayid, Nevewe, if it might ybe 75
 That soche a worship might befallin the
 That thou this famous trefure mightist win,
 And bringin it my region within,
 It were to me grete plesauce and honour,
 Than were I holdin to quite thy labour, 80

And all thy costis I wold my self make,
 And chesith what folke thou wolt with the take
 Let se now, darste thou takin this voiage?
 Jason was young, and lustie of corage,
 And undirtoke to doen this ilke emprise;
 Anon Argus his shippis gan devise.

With Jason went the strong stout Hercules,
 And many' an othir that he with him ches;
 But who so askith who is with him gon
 Let him rede the boke Argonauticon,
 For he wold tel a talè long inough.
 Philocretes anon the saile up drough,
 Whan that the winde was gode, and gan him hie
 Out of his countre callid Theffalie.
 So long thei sailid in the saltè se
 Till in the ile of Lemnos arived he,

All be this nat reherfid of Guido,
 Yet saith Ovide in his Episslis so;
 And of this ileland ladie was and quene
 The faire and yonge Hypsipyle the shene,
 That whilom Thoas doughtir was, the king.

Hypsipyle was gon in her playing,
 And roming on the clevis by the se;
 Undir a banke anone espyd she
 Where laie the shippe that Jason gon arive;
 Of her godeness adounne she sendith blive
 To wetin if that any straungè wight
 With tempest thidir were iblowe anight,

To doen 'hem socour, as was her usaunce
To furth'rin every wight, and don plesaunce 110
Of very bounte and of curtise.

This messangir adoune him gan to hie,
And founde Jafon and Hercules also,
That in a cogge to londe werin igo
'Hem to refreshin and to take the aire, 115
The morowning attempre was and faire,
And in ther waie this messangir 'hem mette;
Full conningly these lordis two he grette,
And did his message, asking 'hem anon
If thei wer brokin or ought wo bigon, 120
Or had nede of lodesmen or of vitaile?
For of succour they shouldin nothing faile,
For it was uttirly the Quen's will.

Jafon answerid mekily and still,
My ladie (quod he) thanke I hertily 125
Of her godenesse: us nedith truily
Nothing as now, but that we werie be,
And comin for to plaie out of the se
Till that the winde be bettir in our waie.

This ladie romith by the cliffe to plaie, 130
With her nyenè, endlong upon the stonde,
And findith Jafon and this othir stonde
In speking of this thing, as I you told.

This Hercules and Jafon gan behold
How that the Quene it was, and faire her grete, 135
Anon right as thei with this ladie mete,

And she toke hede, and knewe by ther manere,
 By ther araie, by wordis, and by chere,
 That it were gentillmen of grette degre,
 And to the castle with her ledith she 140
 These straungè folke, and doith 'hem gret honor,
 And askith 'hem of travaile and of labor
 That thei have suffrid in the saltè se;
 So that within a daie, or two or thre,
 She knewe by the' folke that in his shippis be 145
 That it was Jafon, full of renomè,
 And Hercules, that had the gretè loos,
 That foughtin the aventures of Colchos,
 And did 'hem honour morè than before,
 And with 'hem deled evir longir the more, 150
 For thei ben worthy folke withoutin lese,
 And namely moſte she spake with Hercules,
 To him her herte she bare, an he should be
 Sadde, wiſe, and truſe, of wordis aviſe,
 Withoutin any othir affection 155
 Of love, or othir imaginacion.

This Hercules hath this Jafon ſo preiſed,
 That to the ſunnè he hath him up reiſed,
 That haſe ſo true a man there n'as of love
 Undir the cope of heven that is above, 160
 And he was wiſe, hardie, ſecrete, and riche,
 Of theſe iii pointis there n'as non him liche,
 Of fredome paſſid he and luſtichedde
 All tho that livin and all tho ben dedde,

Thereto so grete a gentillman was he, 163
 And of Theffalie likely king to be;
 There n'as no lacke but that he was agast
 To love, and for to spekin shamefast;
 Him had levir himself murdir and die
 Than that men should a lovir him espie, 170
 As woldè God above that I had give
 My blode and fleshe, so that I might live
 With the bones, that he had aught where a wife
 For his estate, for soche a lustie life
 She shouldin ledin with this lustie knight: 175
 And all this was compasild on the night
 Betwixin Jafon and this Hercules:
 Of both these two here was a shrewdè lese,
 To come to house upon an innocent,
 For to bedote this Quene was ther entent. 180
 And Jafon is as coie as is a maide;
 He lokith pitoufly, but naught he saied;
 But frely yave he to her counsaillers
 Yeftis full grete and to her officers,
 As would God that I lesir had and time 185
 By proceffe all his woeing for to rime;
 But in this house if a false lovir be,
 Right as himself now doeth right so did he
 With faining and with every subtile dede:
 Ye get no more of me but ye woll rede 190
 Th' originall, that tellith all the caas.

The sothe is this, that Jafon weddid was

Unto this Queene, and toke of her substance
 What so him list unto his purveiance;
 And upon her begate he childrin two,
 And drough his faile, and sawe her nevyr mo.
 A lettir sent she unto him certain,
 Which were to long to writin and to fain,
 And him reprovith of his grete untrooth,
 And prayith him on her to have some outh,
 And on his childrin two: she saied him this,
 That thei be like of allè thing iwis
 To Jafon, save that thei couth nat begile;
 And prayid God or it were longè while
 That she that had his herte ireft her fro
 Mote findin him untrue and false also,
 And that she mustè both her childrin spill,
 And allè tho that suffrith him his will.
 And true to Jafon was she all her life,
 And evir kept her chaste as for his wife,
 Ne nevyr had she joie at her herte,
 But dyid for his love of sorowes smerte.
 To Colchis tomin is this Duke Jafon,
 That is of love devourir and dragon,
 As matire appetitith forme alwaie,
 And from forme into forme it passin maie,
 Or as a wellè that were botomles;
 Right so can false Jafon have no pees
 For to desirin through his appetite
 To doen with gentillwoman his delite;



LEG. OF HYSIPYLE AND MEDER.

85

This is his luste and his felicite.
Jafon is romid forthe to the cite
That whilom clepid was Jafonico,
That was the maistroute of all Colchos,
And hath itolde the cause of his coming 225
Unto Æceta, oi that countre king,
Praying him that he must doen his affaie
To gette the Fleece of Golde if that he maie,
Of whiche the King assentith to his bone,
And doth him honour as it is to done, 230
So ferforth that his doughtir and his heire
Medea, whiche that was so wise and faire,
That fairir sawe there nevir man with eye,
He made her doen to Jafon companie
At mete, and sittin by him in the hall. 235

Now was Jafon a semely man withall,
And like a lorde, and had a grete renown,
And of his loke roiall as a lioun,
And godelie of his speche and familiere,
And coud of love the craft and art plenere 240
Withoutin boke, with everiche observaunce;
And as Fortune her ought a foule mischaunce
She woze enamorid upon this man.

Jafon, (quod she) for ought I se or can
As of this thing the whiche ye ben about, 245
Ye and your self ye put in mochil doubt,
For who so woll this avinture atcheve
He maie not make it with a litle paine

Withoutin deth, but I his helpe be;
 But nathêles it is my will (quod she) 250
 To forthrin you so that ye shall nat die,
 But turnin founde home to your Thessalie.

My right fair lady! (quod this Jafon tho)
 That ye have of my deth or of my wo
 Any regarde, and doen me this honour, 255
 I wot wel that my might ne my labour
 May nat deservin it my liv'is daie;
 God thankè you there I ne can ne maie:
 Your man am I, and lowely you besече
 To ben my helpe withoutin more speche; 260
 But certis for my deth shal I not spare.

Tho gan this Medea to him declare
 The peril of this case fro point to point,
 Of his batayle, and eke in what disjoynt
 He motè stondin, of whiche no cature 265
 Save onely she ne might his lyfe assure:
 And shortly, right to the poynt for to go,
 They ben accordid full betwyxe 'hem two
 That Jafon shal her wedde as her true knight,
 And terme yfet to comin sone at night 270
 Unto her chambre, and make there his othe
 Upon the goddes, that he for lefe or lothe
 Ne shulde her nevir falsin nyght ne daye
 To ben her husbonde whyle he lyvin maye,
 As she that from his deth him savid here; 275
 And hercupon at night they mette yfere,

And doth his othe, and goth with her to bedde;
 And on the morowe upwarde he him spedde,
 For she hath taught him how he shal nat fayle
 The Flees to wynde and stintin his bataile, 280
 And sauid hym his life and his honour,
 And gate him a name as a conquerour,
 Right through the sleight of her enchantement.
 Now hath Jason the Flese, and home is went
 With Medea, and tresours full grete wonne: 285
 But unwyfe of her fathir she is gonne
 To Thessalye with Duke Jason her lefe,
 That astirwarde hath brought her to mischese,
 For as a traytour he is from her go,
 And with her lefte yongè childrin two, 290
 And falsely hath betrayid her, alas!
 And er in love a chese traytour he was,
 And weddid yet the thirde wyfe anon,
 That was the doughtir of the Kyng Creon.
 This is the mede of lovyng and guerdon 295
 That Medea receved of Duke Jason
 Right for her trouthe and for her kyndinesse,
 That loved him bettir than her self i pesse,
 And lefte her fathir and her herytage:
 And of Jason this is the vassalage, 300
 That in his dayes n'as nevyr non yfounded
 So false a lovyr goyng on the grounde;
 And therefore in her lettir thus she sayd,
 First when she of his falsnesse him upbrayd,

Why lykid me thy yelow here to se 303

More than the boundis of myn honeste?

Why lykid me thy youth and thy fayrnesse,
And of thy tonge the' infynite gracyousnesse?

O! haddest thou in thy conquest ded ybe
Ful mikil untrouth had there dyed with the.

Wel can Ovide her lettre' in verse endyte,

Whiche were as now to longè for to write. 312

Here endeth the Legende of Hyppolyte and Medea.

HERE FOLOWETH

THE LEG. OF LUCRECE OF ROME.

Newe mote I sain th' exilyng of kyngis

Of Rome for ther horrible doyngis,

Of the laste kynge Sextus Tarquinius,

As saith Ovid and Titus Lyvius;

But for that cause tel I nat this storye, 3

But for to prayse and drawe in memorye

The very wyfe. the very true Lucrese,

That for her wifhode and her stedfastnesse

Nat onely that these Panymes her commende,

But that yclepid is in our Legende 10

The gret Austyn, that hath compassioun

Of this Lucrece that starfe in Romè toun,

And in what wise I woll but shortly trete,

And of this thing I touch not but the grete.

Whan Ardea besiegid was aboute 13

With Romayns that ful sterne werin and stout,

Ful longè lay the siege, and litil wroughten,
So that they wer halfe ydil as 'hem thoughten,
And in his play Tarquinius the yonge...
Gan for to jape, for he was lyght of sounge, 20
And sayid that it was an ydle lyfe,

No man dyd there no more than did his wife,
And let us speke of wivis, that is best,
Praise evèrie man his own as him left,
And with our spechis let us ese our herte. 25

A knyght (yclepid Colatin) up sterde,
And sayid thus, Nay, Sir, it is no nede
To trowin on the worde but on the dede;
I have a wife (quod he) that as I trowe
Is holdin gode of al that er her knowe, 30
Go we to Rome to nyght and we shul se.

Tarquinius answerde, That lykith me.
To Rome they be comin, and fast 'hem dighte
To Colatyn's house, and downe they light,
Tarquinius and eke this Colatine; 35
The husbonde knewe the estirs wel and fyne,
And ful prively into the house thei gone:

Nor at the gate ne portir was there none,
And at the chambre dorè they abyde.
This noble wife fate by her bedd'is fyde 40
Discheveled, for no malyce she ne thought,
And soft wol, saith Livy, that she wrought
To kepin her from slouth and ydilnesse,
And bad her seryauntes done ther befinesse,

And askith 'hem, What tidinges herin yet
 How saith men of the sieg, howe shal it be?
 God wolde the wallis were fallin adowne!
 Myn husbond is to long out of this towne,
 For whiche drede doth me forly to smerte,
 Right as a swaerde it styngith to mine heert
 Whan I thinkin on this or of that place;
 God save my lorde, I pray him for his grace!
 And therewithal so tenderly gan wepe,
 And of her werke she toke no more kepe,
 But mekily she let her eyin fall,
 And thilkè fainblant fate her wel withal,
 And eke her teris, ful of honestè,
 Embelissid her wisely chastitè;
 Her countinaunce is to her hertè dignè,
 For thei accordidin in dede and signe.
 And with that wordè her husbonde Colatin,
 Or she of him was ware, came sterling in,
 And sayid, Drede the nat for I am here:
 And she anon up rose with blisful chere,
 And kyssed him, as of wivis is the wonne.

Tarquinius, this proude king's sonne,
 Concevid hath her beantie and her chere,
 Her yelowè here, her bountie', and her manere,
 Her hewe, her wordis, that she hath complained,
 And by no craft her beantie was nat fained,
 And caught unto this lady soche desire
 That in his heit he brent as any fire,

So wodely, that his witte was all forgotten,
 For wel thought he she shuldè nat be gotten;
 And aye the more that he was in dispaire 75
 The more he covetith and thought her faire;
 His blindè luste was al his coveting.
 On morowe, whan the birde began to syng,
 Unto the siege he cometh ful privily,
 And by himselfe he walkith sobirly, 80
 The' ymage of her recording alway newe,
 Thus lay her here, and thus fresh was her hew,
 Thus fate she, thus she spake, this was her chere,
 Thus faire she was, and this was her manere:
 Al this conceite his herte hath newe ytaks, 85
 And as the se with tempest al to shake,
 That aftir whan the storme is al ago
 Yet woll the watir quappe a daie or two,
 Right so, though that her formè were absent
 The plefaunce of her formè was present; 90
 But nathelesse nat plefaunce but delite,
 Or an unrightful talent with dispite,
 For maugre her she shal my lemman be,
Hap helpith hardy man alway, (quod he;)
 What endè that I make it shal be so, 95
 And gyfte him with his sworde and gan to go:
 And he forth ritt til he to Rome is come,
 And al alone his way that he hath nome
 Unto the house of Colatin ful right;
 Down was the sunne, and day hath lost his lyght; 100

And in he come unto a privie halke,
 And in the night ful thefely gan he stalken,
 Whan every wight was to his rest ybrought,
 Ne no wight had of treson soche a thought,
 Whethir by windowe or by ethir gin :
 With swerde ydrawe shortly he cometh in
 There as she lay, this noble wife Lucrece,
 And as she woke her bedde she felte presse;
 What best is that (quod she) that wayish thou?

I am the king's sonne Tarquinus,
 (Quod he) but and thou crie or noise ymake,
 Or if thou any creature awake,
 By thilkè God that formid man of lyve
 This swerdè through thyne hertè shal I ryve;
 And therwithal unto her throte he sterre,
 And set the swerde al sharpe upon her herte.
 No word she spake; she hath no might therto;
 What shal she saine? her witte is al ago,
 As when a wolfe findith a lambe alone;
 To whom shal she complaine or make her mone?
 What! shal she fightin with an hardie knight?
 Wel wotte men that a woman hath no might;
 What shal she crie, or how shal she asterte,
 That hath her by the throte with swerde at herte?
 She askith grace, and said al that she can.

No, wolt thou nat tho? (quod this cruil man)
 As wisely Jupiter my soule save
 As I shal in thy stable sle thy knave

And lay him in thy bedde, and loudè criè
That I the fyndin in-foche avoutric; 130

And thus thou shalt be ded, and also lese
Thy name, for that thou shalt none othir chese.
This Romains wives lovidin so ther name
At thilke tyme, and dredidin so the shame,
That what for fere of flaundre' and dred of deth 135

She lost at onis both her wit and breth,
And in a swough she lay, and woxe so ded
Men mightin smitin of her arme or hed,
She felth nothing neithir foule ne feyre.

Tarquinius, that art a king'is heyre, 140
And shuldist as by linage and by right
Done as a lorde and as a very knight,
Why hast thou done dispite to chivalrye?
Why hast thou done thy lady vilanie?
Alas! of the this was a vila'inous dede. 145

But nowe to the' purpose. In the story' I rede
Whan he was gonne, and this mischaunce is fal,
This lady sent aftir her frendis al,
Fathir, mothir, and husbonde, al yfere,
And dischevilid with her herè clere, 150

In habyt soche as women usid the
Unto the buryeng of ther frendis go,
She fate in hal with a sorowful syght:
Her frendis askin what her aylin myght,
And who was ded? and she fate aye wepyng, 155
A worde for shame ne may she forth out bring,

Ne upon them she durst nat behold ;
But at the laste of Tarquin she 'hem tolde
This ruful case, and al this thyng horrible :
The wo to tellin were impossible
That she and al her frendis make at ones ;
Al haddin folkis hertis ben of stones
It might have makid 'hem upon her rewe,
Her hert ywas so wifely and so trewe.
She said that for her gilte ne for her blame
Her husbonde shulde nat have the foule name ;
That woldè she nat sufferin by no waye.
And they answerid al unto her saye
That they foryave, it her, for it was right,
It was no gylte, it lay nat in her myght,
And saydin her ensamplis many one :
But al for naught, for thus she said anone,
Be as be may (quod she) of forgyvng,
I will nat have no forgyfte for nothing :
But privily she coughtin forth a knife,
And therwithal she rafte her selfe her life,
And as she fel adowne she cast her loke,
And of her clothis yet gode hede she toke,
For in her fallyng yet she had a care
Lesse that her fete or soche thingis lay bare,
So wel she lovid clennesse and eke trouthe.
Of her had all the towne of Romè routhe,
And Brutus hath by her chaste blode yswore
That Tarquin shulde ybanished be therfore

LEG. OF LUCRECE OF ROME.

And al his kinne, and let the peple cal;
And opinly the tale he tolde 'hem al,
And opinly let cary' her on a bere
Through al the towne, that men may se and h
The' horrible dede of her oppressioun;
Ne nevir was there kyng in Rome toun
Sens thylke day: and she was holdin there
A faynt, and evre' her day yhalowed dere
As in ther lawe. And thus endith Lucreffe
The noble wyfe, Titus berith witnesse.
I tel it for she was of love so trewe,
Ne in her wil she chaungid for no newe,
And in her stable herte sadde and kinde, •
That in these women men may al day finde
There as they cast ther hert there it dwellith;
For wel I wote that Christ himselfe tellich
That in Israel, as wide as is the londe,
He so grete faith in al the londe ne fonde
As in a woman, and this is no lie:
And as for men, loke ye soche tyrannie
Thei done al daie, assay'hem who so list,
The trewist is ful brotil for to triste.

Here endeth the Legende of Lucrece of Rome

HERE FOLOWETH
THE LEGENDE OF ARIADNE
OF ATHENS.

MINOS, Infernal Judge, of Crete the Kyng,
Now cometh thy lotte; thou comist on the ryng:
Nat for thy sake alone writen is this storye,
But for to clepe ayen unto memorie
Of Theseus the gret untrouthe of love,
For whiche the goddis of hevin above
Ben wroth, and wrath have takin for thy synne:
Be red for shame, nowe I thy lyfe beginne.

Minos, that was the mighty King of Crete,
That had an hundrid cities strong and grete, 10
To schole hath sent his sonne Androgeus
To Athenes, of the whiche it happid thus,
That he was slayne, lerning philosophie
Right in that cyte, nat but for envie.

The grete Minos, of the whiche that I speke, 15
His sonnis deth is comin for to wreke.
Alcathoe' he besiegid harde and longe,
But nathêles the wallis be so stronge,
And Nifus that was kyng of that cite
So chivalrous, that litil dredith he; 20
Of Minos or his hoste toke he no cure
Tyl on a daie besil an avinture
That Nifus doughtir fode upon the wal,
And of the sieg behelde the manir al;

LEG. OF ARIADNE OF ATHENS.

So happid it that at a scarmifhing 1
 She caste her hert upon Minos the king,
 For his beautie and for his chivalrye,
 So forely that she wenid for to die :
 And shortly of this proceffe for to pace,
 She made Minos to winnin thilkè place, 30
 So that the cite was al at his wyl
 To favin whom him lifte or ellis spill;
 But wickidly he quit her kyndènèffe,
 And let her drenche in sorowe and distresse,
 N'ere that the goddis had of her pite : 35
 But that tale were to longe as nowe for me.
 Athenis was this King Minos also,
 As Alcathoe' and othir townis mo,
 And this th' effect, that Minos hath so driven
 Them of Athenis that thei mote him yeven 40
 Fro yere to yere ther ownè childrin dere
 For to be slaine, as ye shal astir here.
 This Minos hath a monstre', a wickid best,
 That was so cruil, that without areft
 Whan that a man was brought into' his presence 45
 He wolde him ete; there helpith no defence:
 And evèry thirde yere withoutin doute
 Thei castidin lotte as it came aboute
 In riche and pore, he must his sonnè take,
 And of his childe he must a presente make 50
 To Minos, for to save him or to spill,
 Or let his best devour him at his will:

And this hath Minos don right in dispites;
 To wreke his sonne was fet al his delyte,
 And makin 'hem of Athenis bys thral,
 Fro yere to yere while that he livin shal;
 And hom he failith whan this toon is wom.
 This wickid custome is so long yron
 Till that the King of Athenes, *Ægeus*,
 Mote sendin his owne sonnè *Theseus*,
 Sens that the lotte is fallin him upon,
 To ben devourid, for grace is there non:
 And forth is ladde this woful yongè knight
 Unto the countre' of Minos ful of might,
 And in a prision fettrid fast is he
 Tyl that ilke time he shulde yfretin be.

Wel maist thou wepe, o woful *Theseus*!
 That art a king's sonne and damnid thus;
 Me thinkith this, that thou art depe yholde
 To whom that favid the fro caris colde,
 And nowe yf any woman helpè the
 Wel oughtist thou her servaunt for to be,
 And ben her trewe lovir yere by yere.
 But nowe to come aicn to my matere.

The tourè thièr this *Theseus* is throwe
 Downe in the bottom derke and wondir lowe,
 Was joyning to the wal of a foreine
 That longing was unto the doughtrin tweine
 Of Minos, whiche that in ther chambris grete
 Dweltin above toward the maistirscrete

LEG. OF ARIADNE OF ATHENS.

Of thilkè towne in joy and in solas :
 N'ot I nat howe, it happinid per caas,
 As Theseus complainid him by night,
 The kinge's doughtir that Ariadne hight;
 And eke her sustir Phœdra, herdin al
 His complainte as thei stodin on the wall
 And lokid up upon the brightè mone,
 'Hem listin nat to go to bedde so sone,
 And of his wo thei had compassion;
 A king's sonne to be in soche prison,
 And ben devourid, thought 'hem grete pite:
 Than Ariadne spake to' her sustir fre,
 And sayd, Phœdra, my lese sustir dere!
 This woful lord's sonne maie ye nat here
 Howe pitoufly he complainith his kinne,
 And eke his pore estate that he is inne,
 And giltyesse? certis nowe it is routhe,
 And if ye wol assentin, by my trouthe
 He shal ben holpin, howe so that we do.

Phœdra answerde, Ywis me is as wo
 For him as er I was for any man,
 And to his helpe the best rede that I can
 Is. that we done the gailir privily
 To come and spekin with us hastily,
 And done this woful man with him to come,
 For if he maie this monstir ovircome
 Than were he quite, there is none othir bote:
 Let us wel taste him at his hert's rote,

That if so be that he a wepon have,
Where that he dare, his life to kepe and save, 110
Fightin with this fende, and himself defende,
For in the prison there he shal discende :
Ye wote wel that the best is in a place
That is not derke, and hath rounge and eke space
To welde an axe, or swerde, a staffe, or knife, 115
So that me thinkith he shulde save his life ;
If that he be a man he shal do so :
And we shal make him ballis eke also
Of wexe and towe, that whan he gapith fast
Into the best 'is throte he shal 'hem caste 120
To fleke his hongir and encombre his tethe,
And right anon whan that Theseus sethe
The best achekid he shal on him lepe
To fleen him or they comin more to hepe ;
This wepon shal the gailir or that tyde 125
Ful privily within the prison hyde :
And for the house is crenclid to and fro,
And hath so queintè wayis for to go,
For it is shapin as the mase is wrought,
Therto have I a remedy' in my thought, 130
That by a clewe of twyne as he hath gon
The samè way he may returne anon,
Folo'wing alway the threde as he hath come :
And whan that he this best hath ovircome
Than may he flien away out of this stede, 135
And eke the gailir may he with him lede,

And him avaunce at home in his countre,
Sens that so gret a lord'is sonne is he.

This is my rede, if that ye dare it take.
What shulde I lengir sermon of it make? 140
The gailir cometh, and with him Theseus;
And whan these thingis ben accordid thus,

Adowne fate Theseus upon his kne;
O the right lady of my life! (quod he)
I sorowfull man, ydamnid to the dethe, 145
Fro you whilis that me ylastith brethe
I wol nat twinne aftir this avinture,
But in your service thus I wol endure,
That as a wretche unknow I wol you serve
For evirmore tyl that min hertè sterve; 150
For sake I wol at home min heritage,

And as I said ben of your courte a page,
If that ye vouchsafin that in this place
Ye grauntin me to havin soche a grace
That I may have nat but my mete and drinke; 155
And for my sustinaunce yet wol I swinke
Right as you list, that Minos ne no wight
Sens that he saw me nevir with eyen sight,
Ne no man ellis, shal me nat espye,
So flyly and so wel I shal me gye, 160
And me so wel disfigure and so lowe,
That in this world there shal no man me knowe,
To have my lyfe and to have the presence
Of you that done to me this excellen'ce:

And to my fathir shal I sendin here
This worthy man, which that is your gaylere,

And him so guerdon that he shal wel be
One of the gretist men of my countre:

And if I durste sayne, my lady bright!
I am a king's sonne and eke a knight,

As wolde God if that it might ybe
Ye werin in my countre alle thre,

And I with you to bere you companye,
Than shuld you sene if that I therof lye,

And if I profir you in lowe manere
To ben your page, and servin you right here,
But I you serve as lowly in that place

I pray to Mars to yeve me soch grace
That sham'is deth on me there mote fall,

And deth and povertie to my frendis all,
And that my sprite by night mote go

Aftir my deth and walkin to and fro,
That I mote of foule traitour have a name,

For whiche my sprit mote go, to do me shame,
And if I clayme evir othir degre,

But ye vouchsafin to grauntin it me,
As I have said, of sham'is deth I dey,

And mercy, lady! I can naught els sey.
A semely knight was this Thescus to se,

And yongè, but of twenty yere and thre,
But who so had ysene his countinaunce

He would have wept for routh of his penaunce

For which this Ariadne' in this manere
 Answerde to his profre and to his chere :

A kyng'is sonne and eke a knight (quod she) 195

To ben my seruaunt in so low degre

God shild it ! for the shame of women al,

And lene me nevir soche a case befall,

And sende you grace and sleight of hert also

You to defende and knightly sleen your foe, 200

And lene here aftir that I may you finde

To me and to my sustir here so kynde

That I ne repent nat to yeve you lyfe;

Yet were it bettir that I were your wife,

Sithe that ye ben as gentil borne as I, 205

And have a relme nat ferre but faste by,

Than I suffrid your gentilleffe to serue;

Or that I let you as a page to serue;

It is no profite unto your kinrede,

But what is that that men u'll do for dred ? 210

And to my sustir, syth that it is so

That she mote gone with me if that I go,

Or ellis suffre deth as wel as I,

That ye unto your sonne as trewily

Done her be weddid at your home comming; 215

This is the fynal ende of al this thing,

Ye swere it here on all that may be sworne.

Ye, lady myn, (quod he) or els to torne

Mote I be with the Minotaure to morowe,

And havith here of min hertblod to borowe, 220

If that ye wol, if I had knife or spere
I wolde it lettin out and thereon swere,
For than at erſte I wot ye would me leue,
By Mars, that is the chiefe of my beleue,
So that I mightinly vin and nat faile
To morowe for to takin my bataile
I ne wolde nevir fro this place flye
Tyl that ye ſhulde the very profe yſe;
For now, if that the ſoth I ſhall you ſay,
I have lovid you ful many a daie,
Though ye ne wiſt it nat, in my countre,
And aldirmoſte deſyrid you to ſe
Of any crthly living creature;
Upon my trouthe I ſwere and you aſſure,
This ſevin yere I have your ſervaunt be;
Nowe have I you, and alſo have ye me,
My derè hert! of Athenis Duchefſe.

This lady ſmilith at his ſtedfaſtneſſe,
And at his hertely wordes, and at his chere,
And to her ſuſtir ſayd in this manere:

And ſothely, leve all ſuſtir myn, (quod ſhe)
Nowe be we duchefſis both I and ye,
And ſikerde to the regals of Athenes,
And bothe hereaſtir likely to be quenes,
And ſavid fro his deth a king's ſonne,
As er of gentilwomen is the wonne
To ſave a gentilman enforth ther might,
In honeſt cauſe, and namely in his right,

Me thinkith no wight ought us hereof blame,
 Ne berin us therfore an evil name. 250
 And shortly of this matir for to make,
 This Theseus of her hath leve ytake,
 And every point was performid in dede
 As ye have in this covenant herde me rede;
 His wepen, his clewe, his thing, that I have said, 255
 Was by the gailir in the house ylaide,
 There as the Mynotaure hath his dwellyng,
 Right faste by the dore at his entring,
 And Theseus is lad unto his dethe;
 And forth unto this Minotaure he gethe, 260
 And by the teching of this Adriane.
 He ovircame this best and was his bane;
 And out he comith by the clewe againe
 Ful privily, whan he this best hath slaine,
 And by the gailis gottin hath a barge, 265
 And of his wiv's trefure gan it charge,
 And toke his wife and eke her suster fre,
 And eke the gailir, and with 'hem al thre
 Is stole away out of the londe by night,
 And to the countre' of Enupis him dight, 270
 Thereas he had a frende of his knowing;
 There festin thei, there daunfin thei and sing,
 And in his armis hath this Adriane,
 That of the best hath kept him fro his bane,
 And get him there a noble barge anon, 275
 And of his countre folke a ful gret wome,

What should I tellin more here complaining?
 It is so long it were an hevy thing;
 In her epistle Naso tellith all. 335
 But shortly to the ende tellin I shall,
 The goddis have her holpin for pyte,
 And in the sygne of I'aurus men may se
 The stonis of her corowne shynè clere.
 I will no more spekin of this matere,
 But thus this falsè lovèr can begile
 His trew love; the devil quit him his while! 342
Here endeth the Legende of Ariadne.

HERE FOLLOWETH

THE LEGENDE OF PHILOMELA.

Thou yevir of the formis that hast wrought
 The fayrè world, and bare it in thy thought
 Eternally er thou thy werke began,
 Why madist thou to the flaundir of man? . . .
 Or allbe that it was not thy doying, 5
 As for that ende to makin soche a thing,
 Why suffrest thou that I'ereus was bore,
 That is in love so false and so forswore,
 That fro this world up to the first hevin
 Corruptith whan that folke his name nevyn? 10
 And as to me, so grisly was his dede,
 That whan that I this foulè storie rede

Myne eyin wexin foule and fore also,
 Yet lasteth the venyme of so long ago
 'That it enfeſtith him that wolde beholde 15
 'The ſtorie of Tereus of which I tolde.
 Of Thrace was he the lorde, and kyn to Marte,
 The cruil god that ſtante with bloody darte;
 And weddid had he with full blisfull chere
 King Pandion's faire doughtir dere 20
 'That hight Progne, the floure of her countre,
 Though Juno liſte not at the feſt to be
 Ne Hymen, that the god of Weddyng is,
 But at the feſtè redy ben iwis
 'The Furis three, with all ther mortall bronde. 25
 The oule all night above the balkis wonde,
 'That prophete is of wo and of miſchaunce.
 This revill, full of ſong and full of daunce,
 Laſtid a fourtènight or little laſſe:
 But ſhortlie of this ſtorie for to paſſe, 30
 (For I am werie of hym for to tell)
 Five yere his wife and he togethir dwell,
 'Till on a daie ſhe gan ſo ſore to long
 'To ſene her fuſtir, that ſhe ſawe not long,
 That for deſire ſhe ne wiſt what to ſaie, 35
 But to her huſbonde gan ſhe for to praie,
 For Godd's love, that ſhe mote onis gone
 'To ſene her fuſtre', and come ayen anon,
 Or ellis but ſhe motè to her wende
 She praied him that he would aſtir her ſende; 40

And this was daie by daie all her praier,
With all humbleſſe of wiſehode, worde, and ch

This Tereus let make his ſhippis yare,
And into Grece hymſelf is forthe ifare:
Unto his fathir in lawe gan he praie
To vouchefaſin that for a moneth or twaie
That Philomela his wive's ſuſtir might
On Progne' his wife but onis have a ſight,
And ſhe ſhall come to you again anon,
My ſelf with her I will bothe come and gon,
And as my hert's life I will her kepe.

This olde Pandion, this kyng, gan to wepe

For tendirneſſe of hertè for to leve
His doughtir gon, and for to yeve her leve;
Of all this worlde he lovid nothyng ſo;
But at the laſtè leve hath ſhe to go,
For Philomela with ſalt teris eke
Gan of her fathir his grace to beſeke
To ſene her ſuſtir, that her longith ſo,
And hym enbracith with her armis two:
And therewithal ſo yonge and faire was ſhe,
That when that Tereus ſawe her beaute,
And of arraie that there was none her liche,
And yet of beaute was ſhe to ſo riche,
He caſt his fierie herte upon her ſo
That he woll have her how ſo that it go,
And with his wilis knelid and ſo praied
Till at the laſt Pandion thus yſaied:

Now sonne, (quod he) that art to me so dere,
 I the betake my yonge doughtir here, 70
 That bereth the keie of all myne hert'is life,
 And grete me well my doughtir and thy wife,
 And yeve her levè somtyme for to pleie,
 That she maie se me onis or I deie.
 And sothly he hath made hym richè fest, 75
 And to his folke the moste and eke the lest
 That with him came, and yave him yestis grete,
 And him conveyith through the maistrifrete
 Of Athenis, and to the se hym brought,
 And tournith home, no malice he ne thought. 80
 The oris pullith forth the vessil fast,
 And into Thrace arrivith at the last,
 And up into a forest he her led,
 And to a cave full privily hym sped,
 And in this darkè cave, if that her lest 85
 Or ne list nought, he bad her for to rest,
 Of whiche her herte agrose, and sayid thus:
 Where is my sustir, brothir Tereus?
 And there withall she wept full tendirlye,
 And quoke for fere all pale and pitouslie, 90
 Right as the lambe that of the wolfe is bitten,
 Or as the culver that of the egle is smitten,
 And is out of his clawis forthe escaped,
 Yet it is still aserde and fore awhaped,
 Lest it be hent estsonis; so fate she: 95
 But uttirlye it maie none othir be,

By force hath this traitour ydoen a dede
That he hath rest her of her maidinhede
Maugre her hed, by strength and by his might.

Lo, here a dede of men, and that aright!
She cryith Sustir with full loudè steven,
And Fathir dere! o helpe me God in heven!
All helpith not; and yet this falsè these
Hath doen his ladie yet a more mischefe,
For fere lest that she should his shame crie,
And doen him episalie a vilanie,
And with his swerd her tong of kerfith he,
And in a castill made her for to be
Full privily in prisone evirmore,
And kept her to his usage and his store,
So that she ne might nevir more asterte.

O sely Philomela! wo' is thine herte,
Huge ben thy sorowis, and wondir smerte;
God wreke the, and sende the thy bone!
Now it is time I make an endè sone.

This Tereus is to his wife icome,
And in his armis hath his wife inome,
And pitously he wept, and shoke his hedde,
And swore her that he found her sustir dedde,
For whiche this felie Progne hath soche wo
That nigh her sorowfull herte brake atwo:
And thus in teris let I Progne dwell,
And of her sustir forthe I woll you tel.

This wofull ladie lernid had in youth
 So that she workin and enbraudin couth, 125
 And wevin in her stole the radèvore,
 As it of women hath ben wovid yore;
 And, sothly for to saine, she hath her fill
 Of mete and drinke, of clothing at her will,
 And couth eke rede well inough and endite, 130
 But with a pennè she ne could not write,
 But lettirs can she wevin to and fro,
 So that by that the yere was all ago
 She had ywovin in a stamen large
 How she was brought fro Athens in a barge, 135
 And in a cave how that she was ybrought,
 And all the thyng that Tereus ywrought
 She wave it wel, and wrote the storie' above
 How she was servid for her sustir's love;
 And to a knave a ring she yave anon, 140
 And prayid him by signis for to gon
 Unto the Quene, and berin her that clothe,
 And by signis swore him many an othe
 She should him yevin what she gettin might.

This knave anon unto the Quene him dight, 145
 And toke it her, and all the manir tolde:
 And when that Progne hath this thing behold
 No worde she spake for sorowe and for rage,
 But fainid her to gon on pilgrimage
 To Bacchus temple'; and in a little stounde 150
 Her dombe sustir yfittyng hath she founde,

Weping in the castill her self alone;
 Alas the wo, the constraint, and the mone,
 That Progne upon her dombe safsir maketh!
 In armis everiche of 'hem othir taketh: 155
 And thus I let 'hem in ther sorowe dwell,
 The remenaunt is no charge for to tell,
 For this is all and some, thus was she served
 That nevir ought agiltid ne deserved
 Unto this cruill man that she of wiste. 160
 Ye maie beware of men if that you liste,
 For all be that he woll not for his shame
 Doin as Tereus to lese his name,
 Ne serve you as a murderer or a knave,
 Full little while shullin ye trewe him have,
 That woll I sain, al wer he now my brother,
 But it so be that he maie have none other. 167

Here endeth the Legende of Philomela.

HERE FOLLOWETH

THE LEGENDE OF PHYLLIS.

By prove as well as by aucthorite
 That wickid fruite commeth of a wickid tre
 That maie ye find if that it likith you;
 But for this ende I speke this as now,
 To tellin you of false Demophoon; 3
 In love a safsir herd I nevir non

But it werin his fathir Theseus;
 God for his grace fro soche one kepin us!
 Thus these women yprayin that it here:
 Now to the' effecte tourne I of my matere. 10
 Destroyid is of Troiè the cite;
 This Demophon came sailyng in the se
 Toward Athenis, to his paleis large;
 With him came many' a ship and many' a barge
 All full of folke, of whiche full many one 15
 Is woundid fore, and sike, and wo begone,
 And thei have at the siegè long ilaine;
 Behinde him came a winde and eke a raine
 That shofe so fore his saile ne might not stonde,
 Hym were levir then all the worlde a londe; 20
 So huntith hym the tempest to and fro,
 So darke it was he could no where ygo,
 And with a wave to brustin was his sterc;
 His ship was rent so lowe in soche manere
 That carpenter ne could it not amende; 25
 The se by night as any torche brende
 For wodè, and possith him up and doun,
 Till Neptune hath of hym compassioun,
 And Thetis, Chorus, Triton, and thei all,
 And madin him upon a londe to fall 30
 Whereof that Phyllis lady was and quene,
 Lycurgus doughtir, fairir unto sene
 Then is the floure again the brightè sonne:
 Unneth is Demophon to londe iwoune,

Weke and eke werie, and his folke forpined
Of werinesse, and also enfamined,
And to the deth he was almoste idriven:
His wise folke counsaile have him yeven
To sekin helpe and succour of the Quene,
And loke what his grace mightin bene,
And makin in that lande some chevisaunce,
And kepin him fro we and fro mischaunce,
For like he was and almoste at the deth,
Unnethis might he speke or drawin breth,
And lieth in Rhodopeia hym to reste.
When he may walkin him thought it was beste
Unto the courte to sekin for succour;
Men knewe him wele, and diddin hym honour,
For at Athenis duke and lorde was he,
As Theseus his fathir hath ibe,
That in his tymè was of grete renoun,
No man so grete in all his regioun,
And like his fathre' of face and of stature,
And false of love, it came hym of nature,
As doeth the foxe Renarde, the fox' is sonne,
Of kinde he could his oldè fathir wonne
Withoutin lore, as can a drake swimme
When it is caught and caried to the brimme.
This honorable Phyllis doth him chere;
Her likith well his porte and his manere;
But I am all agrotid here beforne
To write of 'hem that in love ben forsworne,

And eke to hastin me in my Legende,
 Whiche to performè God me grace yfende,
 Therefore I passin shortly in this wise. 65
 Ye have well herd of Theseus the gife
 In the betraying of faire Adriane,
 That of her pite kept him fro his bane :
 At short wordis, right so Demophoon
 The samè waie and the same pathe hath gon 70
 That did his falsè fathir Theseus,
 For unto Phyllis hath he swornè thus,
 To weddin her, and her his trouth yplight,
 And pikid of her all the gode he might,
 Whan he was whole and sounde, and had his rest,
 And doeth with Phyllis what so that him lest, 76
 As well I could, if that me listè so,
 Tellin of all his deyng to and fro.

He saied that to his countre mote hym saile,
 For there he would her weddyng apparaile 80
 As fill to her honour and his also :
 And opinly he toke his levè tho,
 And to her swore that he would not sojourn,
 But in a moneth again he would retourne,
 And in that londe let make his ordinaunce 85
 As very lorde, and toke the obeisaunce
 Well and humbly, and his shippis ydight,
 And home he goith the next waie he might,
 But unto Phyllis again came he nought,
 And that hath she so harde and sore ibought, 90

Alas! as the storie doeth us recorde,
That she was her owne deth right with a corde,
When that she saw that Demophon her traied;
But first wrote she to him, and fast him praied
He would come and delivir her of pain, 95
As I reherfin shall a worde or twain;
Me liste not to vouchsafe on him to fwinke,
Dispendin on him a penne full of ynke,
For false in love was he, right as his fire,
The devill set ther soulis both on fire! 100
But of the lettre of Phyllis woll I write
A worde or twain, although it be but lite.
Thine hostesse, (quod she) o Demophoon!
Thy Phyllis, whiche that is so wo begon,
Of Rhodopeie upon you mote complain, 105
Ovir the terme yset betwixt us twain
That ye ne holdin forwarde as ye saied;
Your ancre whiche ye in our havin laied
Hight us that ye would comin out of doubt
Or that the monè onis went about, 110
But timis fower the mone hath hid her face
Sens thilkè daie ye wentin fro this place
And fowir timis light the worlde again;
But for all that yet shall I sothly sain
Yet hath the fireme of Scython not ybrought 115
From Athenis the ship; yet came it nought;
And if that ye the termè rekin would
As I or othir true lovirs doe should,

I plainin not (God wot) before my daic.
 But all her lettir writin I ne maie 120
 By ordir, for it were to me a charge;
 Her lettir was right long, and thereto large,
 But here and there in rhyme I have it laied
 There as me thought that she hath wel ysaied.
 She saied, The sailis comith not again, 125
 Ne to the worde there n'is no fey certain:
 But I wot why ye comin not, (quod she)
 For I was of my love to you so fre;
 And of the goddis that ye have yswore
 If that ther vengeaunce fall on you therefore 130
 Ye be not suffisaunt to bere the pain;
 'To mochil trustid I, well maie I sain,
 Upon your linage and your fairè tong,
 And on your teris fasly out ywrong:
 How coud ye wepin so by craft? (quod she) 135
 Maie there soche teris evir fainid be?
 Now certis if ye would have in memorie
 It oughtin be to you but little glorie
 To have a felie maidin thus betraied:
 To God (quod she) praie I, and oft have praied, 140
 That it be now the gretist price of all
 And moste honour that er you shall befall;
 And when thine old auncetirs paintid be,
 In whiche men maie ther worthinesse yse,
 Then praie I God thou paintid be also, 145
 That folke maie redin fortheby as thei go,

Lo! this is he that
 Betrayid hath and doen her
 That was his true love in thought
 But sothly of o point yet maie thei re-
 That ye ben like your fathir as in this,
 For he begild Ariadne' iwis
 With soche an arte and soche a subtilte
 As thou thy felvin hast begild me;
 As in that point, although it be not feire,
 Thou folowist certain and art his heire:
 But fens thus sinfully ye me begile
 My bodie mote y fene within a while
 Right in the haven of Athenis scryng
 Withoutin sepulture and burying
 Though ye ben hardir then is any stone.
 And when this lettir was forth sent a-
 And knew how brotill and how fals h
 She for dispaire sordid her self, alas!
 The sorowe' hath she for the beset!
 The women of your subtilt fo
 men maie ensamy
 no man!

HERE FOLOWETH

THE LEG. OF HYPERMNESTRA.

IN Grece whilom were dwelling bretherne two,
Of whiche that one was callid Danao,
That many' a sonne hath of his bodie wonne,
As soche false loviris oftimis conne.

Emongis his sonnis all there was one 5
That aldirmoste he loved of everychone,
And when this child was borne this Danao
Shope him a name, and callid hym Lino;
That othir brothir callid was Egiste,
That was of love as false as er him list; 10
And many' a daughtir gate he in his life,
Of whiche he gate upon his righte wife
A doughtir dere, and did her for to call
Hypermnestra, the yongift of 'hem all,
The whichè childe of her nativite 15
To alle gode thewis yborne was she,
As likid to the goddes or she was borne
That of the shefe she should be the corne:
The werdis that we clepin Destine
Hath shapin her that she must nedis be 20
Pitous, and fad, and wise, and true as stele;
And to this woman it accordith wele,
For though that Venus yave her grete beute
With Jupiter compownid so was she

That conscience and trouthe, and drede of shame, 25
 And of her wifehode for to kepe her name,
 This thought her was felicity as here:
 And Red Mars was at that tyme of the yere
 So feble that his malice is him raste, 30
 Repressid hath Venus his cruill crafte,
 And what with Venus and othir oppression
 Of housis Mars his venime is adon,
 That Hypermnestra dare not handle' a knife
 In malice, though she shouldin lese her life; 35
 But nathelless as hevin gan the turne,
 Two bad aspectis hath she of Saturne,
 That made her for to dyin in prison;
 And I shall astir makin mencion
 Of Danaos and Egistis also,
 And though so be that thei were brethrin two,
 For thilke tyme n'as sparid no linage,
 It likid 'hem to makin mariage
 Betwixt Hypermnestra and him Lino,
 And castin soche a daie it shall be so,
 And full accordid was it uttirly,
 The' araie is wrought, the tyme is faste by;
 And thus Lino hath of his fathir's brother
 The doughtir wedded, and ech of 'hem hath or
 The torchis brennin and the lampis bright,
 The sacrificis ben full redy dight,
 'Th' ensence out of the fire out rekithe sote,
 The floure the lese, is rent up by the rote

To makin garlandis and crounis hie;
 Full is the place of found of minstralcie,
 Of songis amourous of mariage, 55
 As thilkè tymè was the plain usage;
 And this was in the paleis of Egistè,
 That in his hous was lord right as him listè;
 And thus that daie thei drivin to an ende,
 The frendis takin leve, and home thei wend: 60
 The night is come, the bride shall go to bed,
 Egistis to his chamber fast him sped,
 And privily he let his doughtir call
 When that the hous voidid was of 'hem all;
 He lokith on his doughtir with glade chere, 65
 And to her spake as ye shall astir here:

My right doughtir, the tresour of mine herte!
 Sens first that daie that shapin was my sherte,
 Or by the Fatall Suspir had my dome,
 So nye myne hertè nevir thing ne come, 70
 As thou my Hypermnestra, doughtir dere!
 Take hede what thy fathir sayith the here,
 And werke astir thy wisir evirmo,
 For aldirfirst doughtir I love the so
 That all the worlde to me n'is halfe so lese, 75
 Ne I n'olde redè the to thy mischese
 For all the gode undir the coldè mone;
 And what I mene it shal be said right sone,
 With protestacion, as saine these wise,
 That but thou doe as I shall the devise 80

Thou shalt be ded, by him that al hath wrought :
At shorte wordis, thou no scapist nought
Out of my paleis or that thou be dede
But thou consent and werke afir my rede ;
Take this to the for full conclusioun.

85

This Hypermnestra cait her eyin down,
And quake as doeth the lefe of sigis grene,
Ded wast her hew, and like ashin to fene,
And sayid ; Lordi and fathir, all your will,
Afir my night, God wote I shall fulfill,
So it be to me no confusioun.

90

I n'ill (quod he) have non exception,
And out he caught a knife as rasour kene ;
Hide this (quod he) that it be nat isene,
And when thine housbonde is to bed ygo,
While that he slepith cut his throte atwo,
For in my dreame it is ywarnid me

95

How that my nevewe shall my bane ybe,
But whiche I n'ot, wherefore I woli be fiker ;
If thou saie usie we two shall have a biker,
As I have saied, by him that I have sworne.

100

This Hypermnestra hath nigh her wit forlorn,
And for to passe harmelesse out of that place
She grauntid him, there was non othir grace,
And therewithall a costrell takith he,
And saied, Hereof a draught or two, or thre,
Yeve him to drinke when he goith to reste,
And he shall slepe as long as er the leste,

105

The narcotikes and apies ben so strong,
 And go thy waie, lest that him thinke to long. 110
 Out cometh the bride, and with full sobre chere,
 As is of maidins oftin the manere,
 To chambir brought with revil and with song:
 And shortlie, lest this talè be to long,
 This Lino and she beth bin brought to bed, 115
 And every wight out at the dore him sped.
 The night is wastid, and he fell aslepe;
 Full tendirly beginnith she to wepe;
 She rist her up, and dredefully she quaketh,
 As doeth the braunch that Zephyrus yshaketh; 120
 And husat were all in Aragon that cite:
 As colde as any froste now wexith she,
 For pite by the herte strainid her so,
 And drede of deth doith her so moche wo,
 That thryis doune she fill; in soche a were 125
 She risle her up, and stakereth here and there,
 And on her handis fastè lokith she;
 Alas! quod she, shall myne handes blodie be!
 I am a maidin, and by my nature,
 And by my semblaunt, and by my vesture, 130
 Myne handis ben not shapin for a knife,
 As for to revin no man fro his life:
 What devill have I with the knife to do?
 And shall I have my throte ycorve atwo?
 Then shall I blede, alas! and be yshende: 135
 And nedis of this thing mote have an ende;

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waic was he,

iaft ygo,

he right tho

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nclufion.

de of Gode *Women.*

A PRAISE OF WOMEN.

that lyste of women ill to speke,
 in of 'hem worse than they deserue,
 o God that ther neckis to breke,
 ome yll dethe mote tho janglers serue,
 any man were holdin 'hem to serue,
 o 'hem worshipping, honour, and seruisie,
 any manir they best coude devise. 7
 we ought first to think on what manere
 bring us forth, and what pain thei endure
 in our byrth, and sith fro yere to yere
 busily they done ther busy cure
 kepe us fro every mysfavinture
 our youthhed, whan that we have no might
 selfe to kepe neythir by day nor night. 14
 Alas! howe may we say on 'hem but wele
 whom we were yfostred and ybore,
 I ben all our focoure, and trewe as stele,
 I for our sake ful ofte they suffre sore?
 without women were al our joye ylore,
 therefore we ought al women to obey
 I godenesse; I can no more ysay. 21
 This is wel knowin, and hath ben or this,
 it women ben the cause of al lightnesse,
 ghthode, norture, eschewing al malis,
 reise of worship and of worthinesse,
 unto curteys, meke, grounde of alle godenesse,
 d and mery, and trewe in every wise
 at any gentle hert can thinke or devise. 28

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ade fore,
ovirnaunce
to serve and do p
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oe you grace;
you lone ydrawe,
will then fain,
ath you flawe,
an so high pain
o man you restrai
of her eyin two,
ye nedis go.

Thus will ye morne, thus will ye fighin fore,
 As though your hert anon in two wold brest,
 And swerin fast that ye maie live no more,
 Myne ownè ladie, that might if ye left
 Bryngin myne hertè somdele into rest,
 As if you list mercie on me to have,
 Thus your untrouth will evir mercie crave. 63

Thus woll ye plainin tho you nothing smerte
 These innocent cretures for to begile,
 And swere to 'hem so woundid is your herte
 For love of them that ye maie live no while,
 Scarflie so long as one might go a mile;
 So hyith Deth to bryng you to an ende
 But if your soverain lady list you' amende. 70

And if she comfort you in any wise
 For routhe for pite' of your false othis sere,
 So that she weneth it be as you devise,
 And wenith your herte be as she maie here,
 Thus to comfort and somewhat do you chere,
 Then woll these janglirs deme of her full ill,
 And saine ye have her fully at your will. 77

I.o, how redie ther tonguis ben and prest
 To spekin harme of women causileffe!
 Alas! why might ye not as well saie the best
 As for to demin 'hem thus giltileffe?

In your herte iwis there' is no gentilnesse
What of your own gilt liste thus women fame;
Now by my trouth me thinke ye be to blame, 84

95

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And to bethin

But ye shal se t

That ye so but

'Hem to begih

For this ye!

105

In women is all t

For in gode faist

But moche worf

Right commyn

Gode and glad

Is this godelic

ke.
nd here

ere,
hem iwis,

er this
place.

of grace.
your full might,

ur businesse,
aie and night,

and gentilnesse
te disfreffe,

in have routh,
th.

Thus maie sein that thei ben faultlesse,
 and innocent to all your werkis slie;
 and all your craftis that touchin falsnesse
 thei knowe 'hem not, ne maie 'hem not espie;
 o swerin ye that ye must nedis die
 but if thei wouldin of ther womanhedde
 Upon your trouth rewe er that ye be dedde. 119

And then your lady and your hert'is queene
 Ye callin 'hem, and therewith ye sigh fore,
 And saie, My ladie', I trowe that it be sene
 In what plite that I have livid full yore,
 But now I hope that ye wollin no more
 In these painis suffre me for to dwell,
 For of all godenesse iwis ye be the' well. 126

Lo, whiche a paintid processe can ye make
 These harmlesse creturis for to begile!
 And when thei slepe ye painin you to wake,
 And to bethinke you' on many' a wickid wile;
 But ye shal se the daie that ye shall curse the while
 That ye so busily did your entent
 'Hem to begile that falsned nevir ment. 133

For this ye know wel, though I wouldin lie,
 In women is all trouth and stedfastnesse,
 For in gode faithe I nevir of 'hem sie
 But moche worship, bounte, and gentilnesse,
 Right commyng, faire, and full of mekenesse,
 Gode and glad, and lowlie I you ensure,
 In this godelic and angelike cature. 140

A PRAISE OF WOMEN.

And if it happen a man be in distreſſe
 She doth by her ſelfe and her full paine
 With al her might him to comfort and pleaſe,
 If fro his diſtreſſe ſhe might hym relieue;
 In worde he deſide thin ſhe will not faile;
 With al her might ſhe doth her huſbande
 To bringe hym out of his heuineſſe.

Lo, here what gentilleſſe thoſe women haue!
 If we could knowe it for our rudeneſſe
 How beſide ſhe be us to keepe and ſaue
 Eoche in heale and alſo in ſickeneſſe,
 And alwaie right ſorie for our diſtreſſe;
 In every manir thus ſhe we our trouthe.
 That in them is all goodeneſſe and all trouthe,
 And ſith we find in them gentilleſſe, trouthe,
 Worſhip, bounte, and kindneſſe, evirmore,
 Let nevir this gentilleſſe through your ſlouth
 In ther kinde trouthe be evir aught foreloſt
 That in women is and hath ben full yore,
 For in reverence of heven'is queene
 We ought to worſhip all women that bene;
 For of all creatures that were get and born
 This wote ye well a woman was the beſt;
 By her was recovered the biis we' had loſt
 And through that woman ſhall we come
 Wherefore me thinkith if that we had
 We oughten honour women in every p

Therefore I rede that to our liv'is ende,
 Fro this time forth while that we havin space,
 That we have trespaced pursue to amende,
 Praying our Ladie, the welles of all grace,
 To bryngin us unto that blisfull place
 There as she' and all gode women shal be' in fere,
 In hevin above, emong the angils clere. 175

Explicit.

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCY.

*M. Aleyn Secretary to the King of France framed this
 dialogue between a gentleman and a gentlewoman, who
 finding no mercy at her hand dyeth for sorrow.*

HALFE in a dreme, not fully well awaked,
 The goldin Slepe me wrapped undir his wyng,
 Yet not forthy I rose, and well nigh naked,
 Al sodainly my self remembèryng
 Of a mattir, levying all othir thyng,
 Which I must doe withoutin more delaie
 For them whiche I ne durst not disobaie. 7

My charge was this, to translate by and by,
 (All thyng forgive) as parte of my penaunce,
 A boke callid *La bel Dame sans Mercy*,
 Whiche Maistir Aleine made of remembraunce,
 Chief Secretarie with the Kyng of Fraunce;
 And hereupon a while I stode musyng,
 And in my self greatly imaginynge 14

Volume X.

M

What wife I should perform the said processe
 Confideryng by gode advysment
 My uncomynge and my grete simplenesse,
 And ayeoward the straite commandement
 Whiche that I had; and thus in myne entent
 I was vexid and tournid up and doune,
 And yett at last, as in conclusioun,

I cast my clothis on, and went my waie,
 This foresaid charge having in remembraunce,
 Till I came to a hushie grene valaie
 Full of flouris, to se a grete plesaunce,
 And so boldly, with ther benigne suffraunce
 Which redin this boke, touching this matere
 Thus I began, if it plese you to here.

Not long ago, ridyng an esle paas,
 I fell in thought of joyful desperate,
 With grete disese and pain, so that I was
 Of all lovirs the most unfortunate,
 Sith by his darte moste cruill full of hate
 The Deth hath take my ladie and maistrresse,
 And left me sole, thus discomfite and mate,
 Sore languishyng and in waie of distresse.

Then said I thus, It fallith me to cesse
 Eithir to rime or ditees for to make,
 And surely to makin a full promesse
 To laugh no more, but wepe in clothis blake
 My joyfull tyme (alas!) now doeth it flake,
 For in my self I fele no manir cise,

HA BELLE DAME SANS MERCY.

135

written, soche fortune (as I take)
ithir me nor non othir doth please. 44
re so my wyll or myne entent
id were a joyfull thing to write
: coud nevir knowin what it ment,
thereof my tongue hath no delite;
my mouthe I laugh mochil or lite
i should make a countenance untrue,
also would have therof despise,
ing teris have so large issue. 52
icke lovirs I leve that to 'hem longes,
le ther life in hope of alegeaunce,
faie, to make balades and songes
hem as thei fele ther grevaunce,
at was my joye and my plesaunce,
ale I praie God of his mercie save!
my will, myne hert'is ordinaunce,
th here within this tombe igrave. 60
s tyme forthe tyme is to hold my pees;
me this mattir for to trete;
lovirs put 'hem selve in prees,
on is, my tyme is now forgete;
y strength the forcir hath unshete
was sperde all my worldly richesse,
ie godis which that I have gete
t tyme of youth and lustinesse. 68
ath me kept undir his govirnaunce;
l God graunt me forgivnesse!

If I did well yet felt I no plesaunce,
It causid neithir joye nor hevinesse,
For when she dyid that was my maistres
My welfare then ymade the same purchase;
'The Deth hath shette my bondis of witnesse,
Which for nothing myne hert shal nevir pase. 76

In this grete thought fore troublid in my mind,
Alone thus rode I all the morrow tide,
'Till at the last it happid me to finde
'The place wherein I cast me to abide
When that I had no farthir for to ride,
And as I went my lodgyng to purvaie
Right sone I herd a litle me beside,
In a gardin, where minstrels gan to plaie: 84

With that anone I went me backir more,
My self and I, me thought we were inow,
But twaine that wer my frendis here before
Had me espied, and yet I wote not how
'Thei came for me; awaiewarde I me drowe,
Somwhat by force, somewhat by ther request,
'That in no wise I coud my self rescowe,
But nedis I must come in and se the fest. 92

At my commyng the ladies everichone
Bad me welcome, God wote right gentillie,
And made me chere every one by one
A grete dele bettir than I was worthie,
And of ther grace shewed me grete curtisie
With gode disport, bicause I shoud not mourne:

That daie I bode still in ther companie,
Whiche was to me a gracious sojourn. 140

The bordis were spred in right lityl space,
The ladies sat eche as she semid best;
There were no dedly seruautes in the place,
But chosin men, right of the godelyest,
And some there wer, peraventure most freshest,
That sawin ther judgis right full demure,
Without semblaunt eithir to moste or lest,
Notwithstandyng thei had 'hem undir cure. 148

Emong all othir one I gan espie
Which in grete thought ful oftin came and went,
As one that had ben ravished uttirly,
In his language not gretly diligent;
His countinaunce he kept with grete turment,
But his desire farre passid his reson,
For er his eye went aftr his entent
Full many'a tyme when it was no seson. 156

To makin chere sorely hymself he pained,
And outwardly he fainid grete gladnesse;
To sing also by force he was constrained,
For no plefaunce but verie shamefastnesse,
For the compleinte of his moste hevinesse
Came to his voice alwaie without request,
Like as the soun of birdis doeth expresse
When thei sing loude in frithe or in forest. 164

Othir there were that servid in the hall,
But notie like hym, as aftr myne advise,

He was pale, and somewhat lene withall,
 Speche also tremblid in ferfull wise,
 Er alone but when he did serfise;
 blacke he ware, and no devise but plain;
 He thought by him, as my witte coud suffise,
 His herte was nothyng in his owne demain. 131

To fete 'hem all he did his diligence,
 And well he coud, right as it semid me,
 But evirmore when he was in prefence
 His chere was doen, it n'olde none othir be;
 His scholemaistr had soche authorite
 That all the while he bode still in the place
 Speke cou'd he not, but upon her beaute
 He lokid still with a right pitons face. 140

With that his hedde he tournid at the last
 For to beholde the ladies everichone,
 But er in one he set his eye stedfast
 On her whiche that his thought was moste upon,
 For of his eyen the shot I knewe anone,
 Which ferfull was, with right humble requestes;
 Then to my self I saied, By God alone
 Soche one was I or that I sawe these jesses. 148

Out of the prese he went full cily
 To make stable his bevie countinaunce,
 And wote ye well he sighid wondirly
 For his sorowes and wofull remembrance,
 Then in hymself he made his ordinance,
 And forthwithall came to bryng in the messe,

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCY.

139

But for to judge his moſte woſull penance
God wote it was a pitous entremefſe.

156

Aſtir dinir anone thei 'hem avanced
To daunce above the folk evèrychone,
And forthwithal this hevie man he daunced
Somtime with twaine and ſomtimis with one;
Unto 'hem all his chere was aſtir one,
Now here, now there, as fell by avinture,
But er emong he drew to her alene
Whiche that he moſte drede of livyng cature.

164

To mine adviſe gode was his purveiaunce
When he her choſe to his maiſtreſſe alone,
If that her herte were ſet to his pleaſaunce
As moche as was her beautèous perſone,
For who ſo evir ſetteth his truſt upon
The report of the eyen withoutin more
He might be dedde and gravin undir ſtone
Or er he ſhould his hert'is eſe reſtore.

172

In her failid nothyng that I coud geſſe
One wiſe nor othir, privie nor aperte;
A garifon ſhe was of godelineſſe,
'To make a frontier for a lovirs herte;
Right yong and freſhe, a woman full coverte,
Aſſurid wele of porte and eke of chere,
Wel at her eſe, withoutin wo or ſmerte,
All underneth the ſtanderde of Dangere.

180

'To ſe the feſt it weried me full fore,
For hevie joye doeth fore the herte travaille,

Out of the prece I me withdrawe therefore,
 And set me doune alone behinde a traile
 Full of levis, to se a grete mervaille,
 With grene wrethis iboundia wondirly,
 The levis were so thicke withoutin faile
 That thoroughout no man might me espie. 188

To this ladie he came full curtisly
 When he thought time to dance with her a trace,
 Set in an herbir made full plesantly,
 Thei restid 'hem fro thens but lityl space,
 Nigh 'hem were none of a certain compace,
 But onely thei, as farre as I could se;
 Save the traile there I had ychese my place
 Ther was no more bitwene 'hem two and me. 196

I herd the lovir sighyng wondir fore,
 For aie the more the sorir it hym sought,
 His inward paine he could not kepe in store,
 Nor for to speke so hardie was he nought;
 His leche was nere, the gretir was his thought:
 He musid fore to conquere his desire,
 For no man maie to more penance be brought
 Then in his hete to bryng hym to the fire. 204

The herte began to sweil within his chest,
 So fore firainid for anguisse and for pain,
 That all to pecis almoste it to brest,
 When both at ones so fore it did constrain
 Desire was bolde, but shame it gan refrain,
 That one was large, the othir was full close;

No little charge was laied on hym certain
To kepe soche werre and have so many sofe. 212

Full oftin times to speke himself he pained,
But shamefastnesse and drede saied evir naie,
Yet at the last so sore he was constrained,
When he full long had put it in delaie,
To this ladie right thus then gan he saie,
With dredefull voice, wepyng, halfe in a rage;
For me was purveied an unhappie daie
When I first had a sight of your visage: 220

I suffre pain, God wote, full hote brenning,
To cause my deth, all for my true servise,
And I se well ye' recke thereof nothing,
Nor take no hede of it in no kinde wise,
But when I speke aftir my best advise
Ye rcke it nought, but make thereof a game,
And though I sewe so grote an entirprise
Yet peirith not your worship nor your fame. 228

Alas! what should it be to' you prejudice
If that a man doe love you faithfully?
To your worship eschewyng every vice,
So am I yours, and will be verily;
I chalenge nought of right, and reson why,
For I am whole submit to your service;
Right as you list it be right so will I,
To binde my self where i was in fraunchise. 236

L'amant.

Though it be so that I can not deserve
 To have your grace, but alwaie live in drede,
 Yet suffre me you for to love and serve
 Without maugre of your moste godelihede;
 Both faith and trowth I give your womanhede
 And my service without any calling;
 Love hath me bound withoutin wage or mede
 To be your man and leve all othir thyng. 244

La Dame.

When this ladie had herd al this language
 She gave answere full soft and demurely,
 Without chaungyng of colour or courage,
 Nothyng in hast, but full mesurably;
 Me thinkith, Sir, your thought is grete foly;
 Purpose ye nought your labour for to cese,
 For thinkith not whilis ye live and I
 In this mattir to set your herte in pese. 245

L'amant.

Ther maie none make the pece but onely ye,
 Which are the ground and cause of all this war,
 For with your eyen the lettirs writtin be
 By whiche I am defied and put asarre;
 Your plesaunt loke, my very lodestarre,
 Was made heraude of thilke same desiaunce
 Whiche uttirly behight me for to barre
 My faithfull trust and all myne affyaunce.

La Dame.

To live in wo he hath grete fantasie,
And of his hert also but slippir holde,
That onely for beholdyng of an eye
Can not abide in pece, as reson wolde;
Other or me if ye list ye maie beholde;
Our eyen are made to loke, why should we spare?
I take no kepe neithir of yong ne olde;
Who felith smart I counsaile hym beware. 268

L'amant.

If it be so one hurte an othir fore
In his defeaute that felith the grevaunce,
Of very right a man maie do no more,
Yet reson would it were in remembraunce,
And sith Fortune onily by her chaunce
Hath causid me to suffre all this pain
By your beautie, with all the circumstaunce,
Why list ye have me in so grete disdaine? 276

La Dame.

To your persone ne have I no disdaine,
Nor nevir had truelie, ne nought will have,
Nor right grete love nor hatred in certain,
Nor your counsaile to knowe, so God me save;
If that soche love be in your minde igrave,
That lityl thyng maie doe you displesaunce,
You to begile or make you for to rave,
I will not caufin no soche encombraunce. 284

L'amant.

What er it be that me hath thus purchas'd
 Wenying hath not decevid me certain,
 But fervent love so fore hath me ichas'd,
 That I unware am castin in your chaine;
 And sith so is, as Fortune list ordaine,
 All my welfare is in your handis fall,
 In eschewyng of more mischevous paine
 Who sonist dieth his care is lest of all.

La Dame.

This sicknesse is right esie to endure,
 But fewe peple it causith for to die,
 But what thei mene I knowe it very sure,
 Of more comfort to drawe the remedie;
 Soche be there now plainyng full pitoussie
 That fele, God wote, not althir gretist pain;
 And if so be love hurte so grevouslie
 Lesse harme it wer one sorowful then twain.

L'amant.

Alas! Madame, if that it might you please
 Moche bet it were by waie of gentillesse
 Of one sorie to make twain well at ese
 Then hym to destroie that liveth in distresse,
 For my desire is neither more nor lesse
 But my service to doe for your plesaunce,
 In eschewyng all manir doublenesse
 To make two joies in fiede of one grevaunce.

La Dame.

Of love I seke neithir plessaunce nor ese,
 Nor have I therein no grete affiaunce;
 Though ye be sick it doeth me nothing plesse,
 Also I take no hede of your plessaunce :
 These who so will ther hertis to avaunce,
 Free am I now and fre will I endure;
 To be rulid by mann'is govirnaunce
 For yerthly gode naie, that I you ensue. 316

L'amant.

Love, which that joy and sorow doth depart,
 Hath set the ladies out of all servage,
 And largely doeth graunt 'hem for ther part
 Lordship and rule of every maner of age;
 The pore servaunt nought hath of advantage
 But what he maie get onely by purchesse,
 And he that ones to Love doeth his homage
 Full oftin tymes dere bought is the richeffe. 324

La Dame.

Ladies, be not so simple, thus I mene,
 So dull of witte, so sottid in folie,
 That for wordis which said be of the splene,
 In faire language paintid full plessauntlie,
 Whiche ye and mo holde scholis of dailie,
 To make 'hem all grete wondirs to suppose,
 But sone thei can awaie their heddis wrie,
 And to faire speche lightly ther eris close. 332

La Dame.

Love is subtile, and hath a grete awa
Sharp in working, in gabbing grete ple
And can hym venge of foche as by disc
Would fele and knowe his secrete govin
And makith 'hem to' obeie his ordinau
By cherefull waies, as in 'hem is suppo
But when thei fallin into repentaunce
Then in a rage ther counsaile is disclofe

L'amant.

Sith for as moche as God and eke Na
Hath avauncid love to so hie degre,
Mocher sharpe is the point, thus am I
Yet grevith more the faute, where er it
Who hath no colde of hete hath no deinte;
The' one for that othir askid is expresse
And of plessaunce knowith none certain
But it be one in thought and hevinesse.

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCY,

La Dame.

As for plesaunce, it is not alwaie one,
That you think swete I think it birtir pain
Ye maie not me constrain, nor yet right ne
Aftir your luste to love; that is but vain;
To chalenge love by right was nevir sein,
But herte assent, before bonde and promiss
For strength and force ne maie not er attai
A will that standeth enfeffid in franchise.

L'amant.

Right faire ladie! God mote I nevir ple
If that I seke othir right in this case
But for to shewe you plainly my disce,
And your mercie to' abide and eke your g
If I purpose your honour to deface,
Or evir did, God and Fortune me shende,
And that I ner unrightfully purchace
One onelis joye unto my liv'is ende.

La Dame.

Ye and othir that swere soche othis fast
And so condempne and cursin to and fro,
Full sikirly ye wene your othis'laste
No lengir then the wordis ben ago,
And God and eke his sainctis laugh also;
In soche sweryng there is no stedfastnesse,
And these wretchis that have ful trust the
Aftir thei wepe and wailin in distresse.

ained. 396

befall,
s desert!
tis all
smert,
dir hert
greved,
lifewert,
d I be releved. 404

Though I n
For my worship
To you I n'll doe
In eschewyng all
For wote ye well
And in bileve so lig
That he takich all as
Of thing God wote

La Dame.

A lightsome herte, a folie of plesaunce,
Are moche bettir the lesse while thei abide,
Thei make you think and bring you in a traunce,
But that sikenesse will sone be remedide;
Respite your thought, and put all this aside;
Full gode disporte ywerieth me all daie;
To helpe nor hurte my will is not apled;
Who troweth me not I let hym passe awaie. 412

L'amant.

Who hath a birde, a faucon, or a hounde,
That foloweth hym for love in every place
He cheriseth him and kepith him ful sounde,
Out of his sight he will not hym enchace;
And I, that set my wittis in this cace
On you alone, withoutin any chaunge,
Am put undir, moche farthir out of grace,
And lesse set by, then othir that be straunge. 413

La Dame.

Though I make chere to every man about
For my worship and for myne owne fraunchise,
To you I n'll doe so withoutin doubt,
In eschewyng all manir prejudise,
For wote ye well Love is so little wise,
And in bileve so lightly will be brought,
That he taketh all at his owne devise
Of thing God wote that serveth him of nought. 418

depart full
as his conceipt will
ed, a gift doen thankfully,
mer accord, nor nevir shal.

L'amant.

on, I seeke none in this case,
te to me it is to hie,
ke your pardon and your grace,
ovith deth or your mercie;
e gode where it wanteth truly
e refon and a curtiſe innore,
our own moche bettir were worthy
straungers to shew 'hent lovely there.

444

A ful gr
That his w
But in dau
That fessir
To hym
Upon no
For oft
That c

La Dame.

What cal ye gode? fain would I that I wist;
 it plesith one an othir smertith fore;
 of his owne to large is he that list
 e moche and lesin his gode name therfore;
 should not make a graunt, little ne more,
 the request were right well accordyng:
 orship be not kept and set before
 that is lesse is but a little thyng.

L'amant.

nto this worlde was foundin nevir none;
 undir hevin creature ibore,
 nevir shall, save onely your persone,
 whom your worship touchith halfe so fore;
 me, whiche have no seson lesse ne more
 youth ne age but still in your service;
 ve no eyen, no wit, nor mouth, in flore,
 all be givin to the same office.

La Dame.

A sul grete charge hath he withoutin faile
 it his worship kepith in sikirnesse,
 in daungir he settith his travaile
 t fessith it with othirs businesse;
 ym that longith honour and noblesse
 none othir should not be awaite,
 f his owne so moche hath he the lesse
 of othir moche soloweth the conceite:

Let doe thyng that no man
Neddes must it cum from you and fro no
Fortune will this, that i for wele or wo
My life endure, your mercy abiding.
And verie right will that I thinke also
Of your worship above all othir thyng.

La Dame.

To your worship fe well, for that is m
That ye spende not your seson all in vain
As touchyng myne I rede you take no h
By your follie to put your seife in pain;
To ovrcome is gode and to restrain
An herte whiche is decevid follilie,
For Worse it is to breke then lowe certain;
Bettir to lowe then to fall seduinly.

L'amant.

Now, faire ladie! thinke sith it first
That Love hath set mine herte undir h
That Love hath set mine herte undir h

La Dame.

I holde it for no gift in sothfastnesse
 That one offrith where it is forsake,
 For soche a gifte' is abandonyng expresse,
 That with worship ayen maie not be take;
 He hath an herte full fell that list to make
 A gift lightlie that put is to refuse,
 But he is wise that soche conceipt will slake,
 So that hym nede neithir studie ne muse. 108

L'amant.

He should not muse that hath his service spent
 On her whiche is a ladie honourable,
 And if I spende my time to that entent
 Yet at the lest I am not reprovable
 Of fainid harte, to thinke I am unable,
 Or I mistoke when I made this request,
 By whiche Love hath of enterprise notable
 So many hertis gottin by conquest. 516

La Dame.

If that ye liste doe astir my counsaile
 Seche a fairir and of more highir fame,
 Whiche in service of love will you prevaile,
 Astir your thought, accordyng to the same;
 He hurtith bothe his worship and his name
 That follily for twain himself will trouble,
 And he also lesith his astir game
 That surely can not set his pointis double. 524

This your counsaile
Is better said than done, to me :-
Though I beleve it not forgive it me :
Mine herte is soche, so whole without feintise
That I ne maie give credence in no wise
To thyng whiche is not sounyng unto truth :
Othir counsaile I fe' is but fantasie
Save of your grace to shewe pite and ruth.

La Dame.

I holde hym wise that workith no folie,
And when hym list can leve and part ther
But in connyng he is to lerne truelie
That would himself conduite and can no
And he that will not aſtir counsaile doe
His sute he puttith into desperaunce,
And all the gode that shold yfall hym
Is lost and dedde clene out of remembre

L'amant.

Yet woll I shewe this mattir faith/
Whilis I live, what evir be my chau/
And if it hap that in my truthe I die
Then deſth ſhall doe to me no disple
I have your harde suff

La Dame.

Of me get ye right noght, this is no fable,
 I will to you be neithir hard nor straite,
 And right will not no man custumable
 To thinke ye should be sure of my conceite;
Who sechith sorowe his be the receite;
 Othir counsaile can I not fele nor se,
 Nor for to lerne I cast me not to' awaite,
 Who will thereof let hym affaie for me.

558

L'amant.

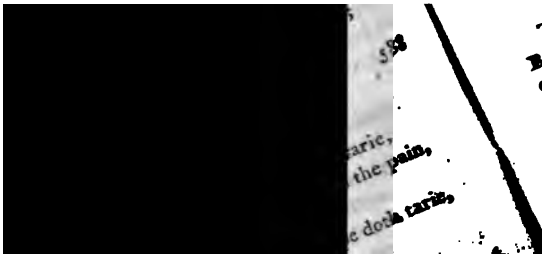
Ones must it be affaied, that is no naie,
 With soche as be of reputacion,
 And of true love the right honour to paie
 Of fre hartis gottin by due raunsome,
 For frewil holdith this opinion,
 That it is grete duresse and discomforte
 To kepe a herte in so straite a prison
 That hath but one bodie for his disporte.

564

La Dame.

I knowe so many causis marveilous
 That I must nede of reson thinke certain
 Soche avinture is wondir perilous,
 And yet well more the coming backe again,
 Gode or worship thereof is seldome sene,
 Where I ne will make any soche araie,
 As for to finde a plesaunce but baraine
 When it shall cost so dere the first affaie.

572



La Dame.

The woful wight what maie he think or say,
 The contrarie of all joye and gladnesse,
 A sicke bodie, his thought is ferre alwaie
 From 'hem that felin no fore nor sickenesse;
 Thus hurtis ben of divers businesse,
 Whiche love hath putt unto grete hinderaunce,
 And truthe also put in forgetfulnesse,
 When thei full fore begin to'figh askaunce. 604

L'amant.

Now God defende but he be harmelesse
 Of all worship or gode that maie befall
 That to werst tournith by his leudenesse
 A gift of grace or any thyng at all
 That his ladie vouchsafe upon hym call,
 Or cherish hym in honourable wise;
 In that defaute what er he be that fail
 Deservith more then deth to suffre twise. 612

La Dame.

There is no judge ifet on soche trespase,
 By whiche of right love maie recovered be,
 One cursith fast, an othir doth manace,
 Yet dyith none, as farre as I can se,
 But kepe ther course alwaie in one degre,
 And evirmore ther labour dooth encrese
 To bryng ladies, by ther grete subtilte,
 For othirs gilte, in sorowe and disese. 620

L'amant.

All be it fo'one doeth so grete offence
 And is not dedde nor put to no justice,
 Right well I wote hym gainith no defence,
 But he must ende in full mischevous wise,
 And all evir saied God will hym dispise,
 For falsified is all full of curidnesse,
 That his worship may ner have entirprise
 Where it reignith and hath the wilfulnesse. 628

La Dame.

Of that have thei no grete fere now a daise,
 Soche as will saie and maintain it thereto,
 That stedfast truthe is nothyng for to praise
 In 'hem that kepe it long in wele or wo,
 Their busie hertis passin to and fro,
 Thei be so well reclaimid to the lure,
 So well lernid 'hem to withholde also,
 And al to change when love should best endure. 636

L'amant.

When one hath set his herte in stable wise
 In soche a piace as is bothe gode and true
 He should not flit, but doe forthe his service
 Alwaie withoutin change of any newe :
 As sone as love beginnith to remewe
 All plesaunce goeth anone in lityl space ;
 As for my partie that shall I eschue
 While that the soule abidith in his placè. 644

L'amant.

To love truly there as it ought of right
 Ye maie not be mistakin doutileffe,
 But ye be foule discevid in your fight
 By your light understanding as I gesse,
 Yet maie we well repele your businesse,
 And unto reson have some attendaunce,
 Moche bettir than to abide by simplenes
 The feble soccouris of disperaunce.

652

L'amant.

Reson, counsaile, wisedome, and gode advise,
 Ben undir love arrestid everichone,
 To whiche I can accorde in every wise,
 For thei ben not rebell but still as stone;
 Ther will and myne be medlid all in one,
 And therwith boundin with so strong a chain,
 That as in 'hem departyng shall be none,
 But pitie breke the mightie bonde atwain.

660

La Dame.

Ye love not your self, what evir ye be,
 That in love stande subject in every place,
 And of your wo if ye have no pite
 Othirs pite bileve not to purchase,
 But be fullie assured, as in this cace,
 I am alwaie undir one ordinaunce;
 To havin bettir trust not astir grace,
 And all that levith take to your plesaunce.

668

O ij

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCEY.

L'amant.

Ave my hope so late and so steadfast
a lecture a ladie should not lacke paine,
t now, alas! it is this up to fast
that Daunger sheweth on me his cruelie,
And if she be the vertue faile in me
Of true service, though she doe faile also
No wonder were; but this is my surety,
I shall suffice whiche waite that or it go.

La Dame.

Love this purpose, I rede you for the best,
For the length ye hope it is in vain,
The lesse ye get as of your hert's rest,
And to rejoyce it shall you ner attain;
When ye abide gode hope to make you faine
Ye shall be founde asottid in dotage,
And in the ende ye shall knowe for certain
That hope shall paie the wretchis for ther wage. 684

L'amant.

Ye saie as fallith moiste for your plesaunce,
And your powir is grete, all this I se,
But hope shall ner out of my remembrance,
By whiche I sele so grete adversite,
For when Nature hath set in you plente
Of all godenesse, by vertue and by grace,
He ner assemblid 'hem, as semid me,
To put Pite out of his dwellyng place.

If a
To
Of fo
And

La Dame.

Pitie of right ought to be resonable,
 And to no wight do grete disavauntage,
 There as is nede it should be profitable,
 And to the pitous shewyng no damage :
 If a ladie will doe so grete outrage
 To shewe pitie and cause her owne debate,
 Of soche pitie comith dispitous rage,
 And of soche love also right dedly hate. 700

L'amant.

To comfort 'hem that live all comfortlesse
 That is no harme, but comfort to your name,
 But ye that have a herte of soche dureffe,
 And a faire ladie', I must affirme the same,
 If I durst saie, ye winne all this defame
 By cruiltie, whiche sittith you full ill,
 But if pitie, whiche maie all this attain,
 In your high herte maie rest and tary still. 708

La Dame.

What er he be that saith he lovith me,
 And paraventure I leve well it be so,
 Ought he be wrothe, or should I blamid be.
 Though I did not as he would have me doe?
 If I medlid with soche or othir moe
 It might be callid pitie mercilesse,
 And astirward if I should live in wo
 Then to repent it were to late I gesse. 716

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCE.

L'amant.

O marble hertel and yet more harde parde,
Whiche mercie maie not perce for no labour,
More strong to bowe then is a mighty tre,
What availeth you to shewe so grete rigour!
Pleseth it you more to se me die this hour
Before your eyen, for your disport and plaic,
Then for to shewe some comfort and soccours
To respite deeth, whiche chasith me alwaie? 724

La Dame.

Of your disease ye may have allegraunce,
And as for myne I let it ovr flake,
Also ye shall not die for my plesaunce,
Nor for your hele I can no foretie make;
I will not hurte my self for othirs sake;
Wepe thei, laugh thei, or sing thei, I waraunt
For this mattir so will I undirtake
That none of them shall make therof avaunt.

L'amant.

I can not skill of love by God alone,
I have more cause to wepe in your presence,
And well ye wote avauntour am I none,
For certainly I love bettir silence:
One should not love by his hert's credence,
But he were sure to kepe it secretlie,
For a vauntour is of no revèrence
When that his tongue is his moste enemye.

La Dame.

ale bouch in court hath grete commaundement,
 man studieth to saie the worst he maie,
 : false lovirs in this tyme now present
 servin best to jangle as a jaie;
 noste secrete iwis yet some men saie
 he mistrustid is in some partise,
 fore to ladies when men speke or saie
 uld not be bilevid in no wise.

748

L'amant.

gode and ill shall be and is alwaie,
 world is soche; *The yerth is not al plain*;
 that he gode the prose sheweth every daie,
 othir wise grete villonie certain;
 not reson though one his tongue distain
 cursid speche to doe hymself a shame
 soche refuse should wrongfully remain
 the gode renomid in ther fame.

756

La Dame.

sh as be nought, when thei here tidinges new
 eche trespas shall lightly have pardon,
 that pursuin to be gode and true
 not set by none ill disposicion,
 intinue' in every gode condicion
 are the first that fallin in damage,
 full frely the hertis habandon
 :yl faithe with soft and faire language.

764

L'amant.

Now knowe I well of veric certainté
 If one doe truelie yet shall he be shente,
 Sith all manir of iustice and pite
 Is banished out of a ladies entente;
 I can not se but all is at one stente,
 The gode, the ill, the vice, and eke the vertue;
 Seche as be gode soche have the punishmente
 For the trespase of 'hem that live untrue. 7

La Dame.

I have no powir you to do grevaunce,
 Nor to punishe none othir creature,
 But to eschewin the more encombraunce,
 To kepe us from you all I hold it sure,
For Falso Semblance bath a face full demure,
 Lightlie to catche these ladies in a waite,
 Wherefore we must, if we will here endure,
 Make right gode watch: lo! this is my conceite. 7

L'amant.

Sith that of grace a godely worde not one
 Maie now be had, but alwaie kept in flore,
 I appele to God, for he maie here my mone,
 Of the darest which grevith me so fore,
 And of pite I complaine furthirmore,
 Whiche he forgate in all his ordinaunce,
 Or els my life to have endid before,
 Whiche so sone am put out of remembrance. 7

La Dame.

My herte nor I have doen you no forscite
 By whiche ye should complaine in any kinde;
 Nothyng hurtith you but your own conceite;
 Be judge your self, for so ye shall it finde:
 Thus alwaie let this sinke into your minde
 That your desire shall ner recovered be;
 Ye noye me sore in wastyng all this winde,
 For I have saied inough, as semith me.

796

This wofull man rose up in all his paine,
 And departid with wepyng countinaunce,
 His wofull herte almoste to braste in twaine,
 Full like to die, walkyng forthe in a traunce,
 And sayid, Deth, come forthe, thy self avaunce,
 Or that myne herte forget his propertie;
 And make shortir all this wofull penaunce
 Of my pore life, full of aduersitie.

804

Fro thens he went, but whithir wist I nought,
 Nor to what part he drewe in sothfastnesse,
 But he no more was in his ladie's thought,
 For to the daunce anone she gan her dresse;
 And aftirward one tolde me thus expresse,
 He rent his heer for anguyshe and for pain,
 And in hymself toke so grete heviness
 That he was dedde within a daie or twain.

812

L'ENVOY.

The true lovirs thus I beseeche you all
 Soche advintures fle 'hem in every wise,
 And as peple defamid ye 'hem call,

For thei truelie do you grete prejudice
 His castelles strong stufed with ordinaunce,
 For thei have had long tyme by their office
 The whole countrey of Love in obeysaunce. 819

And ye ladies, or what estate ye be,
 Of whom Worship hath choise his dwellyng place,
 For Godd's love doe no soche crueltie,
 Nor in no wise ne folowe not the trace
 Of her that here is namid right wisely,
 Whiche by reson me semith in this case
 Maie be callid *La belle Dame sans Mercy*. 826

Go, lityl Boke, God sende the gode passage!
 Chese well thy waie, be simple of manere,
 Loke thy clothyng be like thy pilgrimage,
 And specially let this be thy priere
 Unto 'hem all that the will rede or here,
 Where thou art wrong after ther helpe to call
 The to correcte in any parte or all. 833

Praie 'hem also with thine humble servise
 Thy boldnesse to pardon in this case,
 For els thou art not able in no wise
 To make thy self appere in any place;
 And furthermore besече 'hem of ther grace
 By ther favour and supportacion
 To take in gre this rude Translation, 840

The which God wote standith full destitute
 Of eloquence, of metre, and colours,
 Like as a best nakid without refute

Upon a plain to abide all manir showers :
 I can no more but aske of 'hem socours
 At whose request thou wer made in this wise,
 Commaundyng me with body and servise. 847
 Right thus I make an ende of this proffes,
 Besechyng hym that all hath in balaunce
 That no true man be vexid causelesse
 As this man was, whiche is of remembraunce ;
 And all that doen ther faithfull observaunce,
 And in ther trowth purpose 'hem to endure,
 I praie God sende 'hem bettir avinture. 854

Explicit.

THE ASSEMBLE OF LADIES.

*A gentlewoman dreameth that she seeth a greate number of
 Ladies put up their billes of complaint before a judge, who
 promyseth to relieve their grievances.*

In Septembre', at the fallinge of the lese,
 The freshe celson was altogidir done,
 And of the corne was gathirid the shefe,
 In a gardine, aboute twayne astir none,
 Ther were Ladies walking, as was ther wone,
 Foure in nombre, as to my minde dothe fall,
 And I the fifthe, the simplist of 'hem al. 7

8
 Of gentill women faire there were also
 Disporting hem everiche afir her gife,
 In croffe aleis walking by two and two,
 And some alone, afir ther fantasies;
 Thus occupied we were in diverse wise,
 And yet in treathe we were not al alone,
 There weren knightes and squiris many one.
 14
 Whereof I served? one of hem askid me:
 I said aye, as it fel in my thought,
 To walke aboute the mase in certainte,
 As a hedeless woman that nothing reught.
 He askid me aye, whom that I fought,
 And of my colour why I was so pale?
 Forsothe (quod I) and therby likhe a tale.
 21
 That must me wete, (quod he) and that anon:
 Tel on, let se, and make no taryng.
 Abide, (quod I) ye ben a haffie one;
 I let you wete it is no lityl thing,
 But for bicause ye have a grette longing
 In your desire this processe for to here
 I shal you tel the plaine of this matere.
 It happid thus, that in an astirnone
 My felawship and I by one assent,
 Whan al othir besineffis were done,
 To passe our time into this mase we went,
 And toke our waies eche afir our entent,
 Some went inward and went they had gon out,
 Some stonde in the mid and ioked all about.

And, soth to say, some were ful ferre behinde,
 And right anon as ferforthe as the best,
 Othir there were so masid in ther minde
 Al waies were gode for 'hem both est and west;
 Thus went they forth and had but lityl rest,
 And some ther courage dyd 'hem fore assaile,
 For very wrathe they dyd step o'er the raile; 42

And as they sought 'hem selvin to and fro
 I gate my self a lityl avauntage,
 Al forweried I might no furthir go,
 Though I had won right grete for my viage,
 So came I forthe into a straite passage,
 Which brought me to an herbir faire and grene,
 Ymade with benchis ful crafty and clene; 49

That as me thoughtin there might no cature
 Devise a bette by dewe proporcioun,
 Safe it was clofid wel I you ensure,
 With masonrye of compace enviroun,
 Ful secretly with flairs goyng down
 In myddes the place with turning whele certain,
 And upon that a potte of margelaine, 56

With margettes growinge in ordinaunce
 To shewe 'hem selfe as folke went to and fro,
 That to beholde it was a grete plesaunce,
 And how they were accompainid with mo,
 Ne momblisnesse and sonènesse also,
 The poure pensis were not dislogid there,
 Ne, God wote ther place was evèry where. 63

The flore and bench was good faire and fine
With stons square of many diuers heve,
So wel joynd, that for to say the fath
Al found one, that no one othir knewe,
And with firmith the stremis newe and newe,
As foun bright, springing in soche a wife
That whence it came ye coude it not deuiſe. 7

A lye while ywas I al alone
Beholding wel this delectable place,
My felowship were coming everichone,
So masse we nedis abyde for a space,
Remembering of many diuers cace
Of tyme ypassid yore with fighis depe,
I sat me downe, and there I fel aslepe. 71

And as I slept me thought there came to me
A gentlewoman metely of stature,
Of grete worship the sumid for to be,
A myd wel, not high, but by mesure,
Her countinaunce full sad was and demure,
Her colours blewe al that she had upon;
Then I came no mo but her felse alone. 81

Her gowne wel wa-embraudrid certainly
With stons sette afir her owne deuiſe
In her perillis, her worde by and by
The first *Testament*, as I coude deuiſe;
Thou praisid her in any manir wise
For of her name I might have remembraunce;
But hold she was callid Perseuerance. 91

THE ASSEMBLE OF LADIES.

So furthirmore to spekin was I bolde,
Where she dwellid I prayed her for to say?
And she againe ful curtisly me tolde,
My dwelling is and hath be many' a day
With a lady. What lady? I you pray.
Of gret estate, thus warne I you (quod she.)
What cal ye her? Her name is Loyalte. 91

In what office stande ye or what degre?
(Quod I to her) that would I wete right faine.
I am, (quod she) unworthy though I be,
Of her chambrc her ushir in certaine,
This rodde I bere as for a token plaihe,
Lyke as ye knowe the rule in soche service
Apertaining is to the same office. 105

She chargid me by her commaundement
To warne you and your felawes everichone
That ye shulde come there as she is present
For a counsaile whiche shall be nowe anone,
Or sevin dayis be comin and gone;
And furthirmore, she bad that I shulde say
Excusis there might be none nor delay. 112

Anothir thing was not forget behinde,
Vhiche in no wise I wolde but that ye knewe;
emembre wel and bere it in your minde
I your felawes and ye must come in blewe
erilyche, your matirs for to sewe,
th more, whiche I pray you to thinke upon,
r wordis on your selvis everychon. 119

And be not shafted in no maner wile,
As misty ben, in soche an high pesser;
Make your request as ye can best deuise,
And she gladly wol geve you audience;
There is no grete nor no manis offence
Wherin ye fele that your herte is displeid
But with her help right sone ye shal be cysed. 116

I am right glad (quod I) ye tel me this,
But there is men of us that knoweth the wair.
As of your way (quod she) ye shal not mis,
Ye shal have one to gyde you day by day
Of my felawes, I can not bettir say,
Soche one as shal tel you the way ful right,
And Diligence this gentilwoman hight, 123

A woman of right famous govirnaunce,
And wel cherished, I tel you in certaine,
Her fellowship shal do you grete plesaunce;
Her porte is soch, her maners trewe and plaine,
She with glad chere wold do her besy paine
To bring you there. Now farewell; I have done.
Abyde, said I, ye may not go so sone. 140

Why so? (quod she) and I have ferre to go,
To yeve warning in many divers place
To your felawes and so to othir mo,
And well ye wote I have but lytil space.
Now yet, (quod I) ye must tel me this cace,
If we shal any men unto us cal.
No; one (quod she) may come amonges you all, 147

at one, than? said I: eigh, *Benedicte!*
 t have I done? I pray you tel me that.
 e by my lyfe I trowe but wel, (quod she)
 r I can byleve there is somewhat,
 for to saye you trouthe more can I nat;
 cflions I may nothing be to large;
 Idle must no furthir then my charge. 154
 an thus, (quod I) do me to undirstande
 t place is there this lady is dwelling?
 the (quod she) and one sought al this lande
 r is none, though it were for a king,
 lid wel, and that in every thing,
 touris hie ful plesant shal ye finde,
 i phanis fresh turning with every wynde; 161
 ie chambfis and the parlirs of a sorte,
 i bay windowes godely as may be thought,
 or daunfing and othir wise disporte
 galeries be all right well ywrought,
 : wel I wote if ye were thidir brought,
 take gode hede therof in every wise,
 rol it thinke a very paradise. 168
 'hat hight the place? (quod I) now say me that.
 unt Regarde, (quod she) to tell you plaine.
 ery trouth, (quod I) and wote ye what?
 ay right wel be callid so certaine:
 furthirmore this wold I wit right fain,
 t I shulde do as sone as I come there,
 astir whom that I may best enquire? 175

A gentilwoman portir of the yate
 There shal ye finde, her name is Countinaunce,
 If ye so hap ye come erly or late
 Of her wer gode to have some acquaintaunce,
 She can you tel howe ye shal you avaunce,
 And howe to come to her ladye's presence;
 To her wordis I rede ye geve credence.

182

Nowe it is time that I shulde parte you fro,
 For in gode faithe I have grete businesse.
 I wote right wel (quod I) that it is so,
 And I thanke you of your grete gentilnesse,
 Your comforte hath yevin me hardinesse,
 That nowe I shal be bolde withoutin faile
 To do' astir your advice and gode counsaile.

183

Thus partid she, and I lefte all alone;
 With that I sawe (as I behelde aside)

A woman come, a verie godely one,
 And forth withal as I had her aspid
 Me thought anone it shouldè be the gide,

And of her name anone I did enquire;
 Ful womanly she yave me this answere:

I am (quod she) but a simple creture,
 Sent from the courte, my name is Diligence;
 As sone as I myght come, I you ensure,
 I taried not astir I had licence:

And nowe that I am come to your presence,
 Loke, what service I can you do or may
 Commaundith me; I can no furthir say.

I thankid her, and prayed her to come nere,
 cause I woulde se how she was araide;
 er gown was blew, dressid in gode mancre,
 ith her devise, her worde also, that saide
ant que je puis, and I was wel apaide;
 ad than wist I, withoutin any more,
 was ful trewe that I had herde before.

210

Though we toke nowe before a litil space
 were ful gode (quod she) as I coude gesse.
 owe farre (quod I) have we unto the place?
 daye's journey, (quod she) but litil lesse;
 herfore I rede that now we outwarde dresse
 r I suppose our felawship is past,
 id for nothinge I wolde not we were the' last. 217
 Than departid we' at springing of the daye,
 id forthe we wente a softe and esy pace,
 l at the last we were on our journey
 far outwarde that we might se the place;
 owe let us rest (quod I) a litil space,
 id say we as devoutly as we can
Pater noster for Saint Julian.

224

With al my herte; I assent with gode wil;
 och bettir shal we spede whan we have done.
 an taried we and said it every dyl;
 id whan the day was past farre astir none
 e sawe a place, and thidir came we sone,
 niche rounde aboute was closid with a wal,
 ninge to me full like an hospitall.

231

Then I found I was
A good woman
I have married a
Ye had knowledge of all
Yes, yes, (quod she) I ha
How she would her
And what way ye should
How far my love (quod
How ye have taken upon you
That ye would help me
For wit ye well I would be
Al this prayer is needful
(Quod she againe) come of, and
And ye shall be assured
But this I doubt me
That my scholars be
I want you (quod she) that are
For here they shall
See nothinge I counsaile ye
Make you rely, and tary you
It is no harme though ye be th
So then I desired me in min
And her whether it we
(quod she) ur

Discrecion Purveicour.

wente we forth and met at avinture
 woman, an officir seminge;
 your name? (quod I) tell, gode creture.
 n, (quod she) without lesinge.
 re (quod I) is your most abidinge?
 uod she) this office of purchace,
 urveyour that longith to this place. 266

Acquayntaunce Herbyger.

ove! (quod I) in al your ordinaunce
 er name that is the herbigere?
 (quod she) her name is Acquaintaunce,
 n of right gracious manere.
 is, (quod I) what straungirs have ye here?
 (quod she) of high degre ne lowe,
 : first, as ferforth as I knowe. 273

Countinaunce Porter.

with talis we came streight to the yate,
 ge woman departid was and gone,
 ligence, and knockid fast thereat.
 rithout? (quod Countinaunce anone.)
 quod I) fayre sistir, here is one.
 ne? (quod she) and therewithal she lough.
 ice; ye knowe me wel ynoughe. 289
 opened she the gate, and in we go;
 ordis faire she faide full gentilly,
 elcome ywis; are ye no mo?

e,
:
ge,
unge. 301

y;
rily,
gray,
may,
ndise,
hite. 308
ght unto me,
that I knowe.
e and fe,

And for my worde I have none, this is trew;
 It is ynough that my clothing be blew,
 As here before I had commaundement,
 And so to do I am right well content. 315

Largeffe Stewarde.

But tel me this I pray you hertilye,
 The steward here, say me what is her name?
 She hight Largeffe, I say you surily,
 A faire lady, and of right noble fame,
 Whan ye her se ye wil reporte the fame,
 And undir her to byd you welcomē al
 There is Belchier, marshal of the hal. 322

Now al this while that ye here tary still
 Your own matirs ye may wel have in mind;
 But tel me this, have ye brought any bill?
 Ye, ye, (quod I) and els I were behinde;
 Where is there one, tel me, that I may finde
 To whom that I may shewe my matirs plaine?
 Surely (quod she) unto the chambirlaine. 329

Remembraunce Chamberlaine.

The chambirlaine, (quod I) and say ye trewe?
 Ye, verily, (saide she;) by myne advise
 Ien nat a ferde; unto her lowlye sewe.
 I shalle done (quod I) as ye devyse,
 it I must knowe her name in any wise.
 Quod she to shewe you in substaunce,
 I fa i nyng, her name is Remembraunce. 336

The secretarye may not be forget,
 For she dothe right moche in every thinge,
 Wherefore I rede when ye have with her met
 Your matere whole tel her without faininge;
 Ye shal her fynde ful gode and ful lovinge.
 Tel me her name (quod I) of gentilnesse.
 By my gode sothe (quod she) Avisenesse. 343

That name (quod I) for her is passing gode,
 For every byl and schedule she must se.
 Nowe gode, (quod I) come stande there as I shode,
 My felawes be cominge; yondir they be.
 Is it in jape, or say ye sothe? (quod she)
 In jape! nay, nay, I say you for certayne:
 Se how thei come togethir twain and twaine. 349

Ye say ful sothe, (quod she) that is no nay,
 I se coming a godely company.
 They ben soch folke, (quod I) dare I to say,
 That lyst to love, thinkith it verily,
 And for my love I pray you saythfully
 At any tyme whan they upon you call
 That ye wol be gode frende unto 'hem all.
 Of my frendship (quod she) they shal not mis
 And for their ese to put therto my paine.
 God yelde it you! (quod I) but take you this,
 Howe shal we know who is the chambirlayne
 That shal ye wel know by her word certaine.
 What is her worde, fyfthir? I pray you say.
Plus ne purreys, thus writith she alwaye.

Thus as we stode togydir she and I,
 Even at the yate my felawes were echone,
 So met I 'hem (as me thought was godely)
 And bade 'hem welcome al by one and one :
 Then came forth Countinaunce to us anone,
 Ful hertily, Faire sistirs al, (quod she)
 Ye be right welcome into this countre. 371

I counsaile you to take a litil rest
 In my chambre, if it be your plesaunce ;
 Whan ye be there me thinke it for the best
 That I go in and cal Perseveraunce,
 Bycause she is one of your acquaintaunce,
 And she also wil tel you every thinge
 Howe ye shal be ruler of your cominge. 378

My felawes al and I, by one advise,
 Were wel agreed to do lyke as she sayde ;
 Than we began to dresse us in our gise,
 That folke shoulde say we were not unpurveide,
 And gode wagirs among us there we laide
 Whiche of us was atirid moste godelest,
 And of us al whiche shulde be praisid best. 385

The portir came and brought Perseveraunce,
 Welcomid us in curteise manere ;
 And ke not long (quod she) of your attendaunce,
 I go speke unto the herbigere,
 That she may purvey for your lodging here,
 And wil I go unto the chambirlaine
 To ke for you, and come anone againe. 392

And whan that she departid was and gone
 We sawe folkis coming without the wal,
 So gret peple, that nombre coude we none,
 Ladies they were, and gentil women al,
 Clothid in blewe, echone her worde withal,
 But for to knowe her worde or her devise
 They came so thicke I ne might in no wise. 399

With that anone came in Perseveraunce,
 And where I stode she came freight unto me;
 Ye ben (quod she) of min olde acquaintaunce,
 You to enquire the boldir wolde I be
 What worde they here eche astir her degre;
 I you pray tel it me in secret wise,
 And I shall kepe it close on warrantise. 406

We ben five ladies (quod I) al in fere,
 And gentil women four in company,
 When they begin to opin ther matere
 Than shal ye knowe ther wordis by and by;
 But as for me I have none verily,
 And so I tolde Countinaunce here before;
 Al min aray is blewe, what nedith more? 413

Nowe then (quod she) I wol go backe againe
 That ye may have knowlege what ye shuld do.
 In soth (quod I) if ye wolde take the paine
 Ye dyd right moche for us if ye dyd so,
 The rathir spede the sonir may we go;
 Grete coste alway there is in taryinge,
 And longe to sewe it is a wery thinge. 419

Then partid she and came againe anone;
 Ye must (quod she) come to the chambirlaine.
 We be nowe redy (quod I) everychone
 To folowe you whan er ye list certaine;
 We have none eloquence, to tel you plaine,
 Befeching you we may be so excused
 Our trewe meaning that it be not refused. 417

Then went we forth astir Perseveraunce;
 To se the prees it was a wondir case,
 There for to passe it was a grete combraunce,
 The peple stode so thicke in every place:

Nowe stande ye still (quod she) a well space,
 And for your ese somwhat I shal assay
 If I can make you any bettir way. 434

And forth she gothe among 'hem everychon,
 Making a way that we might thorough passe
 More at our ese, and whan she had so done
 She becktnde us to come where as she was,
 So astir her we folowed more and las;
 She brought us streight unto the chambirlayne,
 There lefte she us, and than she went againt. 441

We salued her, as reson woulde it so,
 Ful humble befeching her gret godmessis
 In our mattire that we had for to do
 That she wolde be gode lady and maistresse.
 Ye be welcome, (quod she) in sothfastnesse,
 And se, what I can do you for to please

We followed her into the chamber dore;
 Edith, (good she) come ye in after me:
 Not were ye well there with a good store
 The godlyist that any wight might see;
 And furthimore about them lokid we
 On eche corner and upon every wal,
 Which was garnish'd of beerd and cryshall.
 Wherein was gyven of stories many an
 Firste howe Phyllis, of womanly paine,
 Dyed pitously for love of Demophane,
 Next after was the story of Thisee,
 Howe that she slewe her selfe under a tre,
 Yet sawe I more, howe in ryght paine
 For Antony was slaine Cleopatras;
 Upon that othir side was Hawes that
 Ful untrewly discevid in her baine;
 There was also Annelida the Queene,
 Upon Arcite howe sore she did compeine
 Al these stories were gravid there on
 And many mo than I reherse you here
 It were to longe to tel you al in ser
 And bicause that the wallis shor
 With fine umberple they were al ovir
 To the entent folke shulde not hu
 And thorough it the stories might
 Than furthimore I went as I was
 And there I sawe withoutin any
 A chaire yset with ful riche apa

And five stagis it was fet fro the grounde,
 cassidony ful curiously wrought,
 ith foure pomelles of golde, and very rounde,
 t with saphirs as gode as coude be thought,
 hat wot ye what? if it wer thorough fought
 I suppose fro this countre to Inde
 nothir soche it were right harde to finde: 483
 For wete ye wel I was right nere to that,
 as I durst, beholding by and by,
 ove there was a riche clothe of estate
 wrought with the nedle ful straungely,
 er worde thereon, and thus it said truely,
Dieu est, to tel you in wordis fewe,
 ith grete lettirs, the bettir I 'hem knewe. 490
 Thus as we stode a dore opened anone,
 gentilwoman semely of stature,
 ring a mace, came out her selfe alone,
 thely me thought her a godely cature;
 e spake nothinge to lowde, I you ensue,
 or hastily, but with godely warninge
 ake rome, (quod she) my lady is cominge. 497
 With that anone I sawe Perseveraunce
 owe she helde up the tapet in her hande,
 owe also in godely ordinaunce
 his gret lady within the tapet stande,
 myng outwarde I wol ye undirstande,
 id aftir her a noble company,
 oude not tel the nombre sikirly. 504

Of ther namis I wolde nothing enquire,
 Furthir than soche as we wolde sewe unto,
 Save a lady whicht was the chauncellere,
 Attemperaunce, sothely her name was so,
 For us nedith with her have moche to do
 In our mattirs, and alway more and more;
 And so forthe to tellin you furthirmore 511

Of this lady, her beaute to discrive
 My conninge is to simple verily,
 For nevir yet the dayis of my live
 So inly faire I have sene none trewly,
 In her estate assurid uttirly;
 There wantid nought, I dare you wel assure,
 That longid to a most godely cature. 512

And furthirmore, to speke of her araye,
 I shal tel you the manir of her gowne;
 Of clothe of golde ful riche, it is no nay,
 The colour blewe, of right godely facyoun,
 In taberde wise, the sleves hanging adown,
 And what purfil there was, and in what wise,
 So as I can I shal it you devise: 515

Aftir a forte the collir and the vente,
 Lyke as *armine* is made in purfilinge,
 With grete perlis ful fine and orient,
 They were couchid all aftir one worching,
 With diamondes in slede of powdiring,
 The slevis and the purfill of a sise,
 They werin made alike in every wise. 518

Aboute her necke a sorte of faire rubyes,
 In white flouris of right fine enamaile,
 Upon her hed set in the fairist wise
 A circle of grete balais of entaile,
 That in ernest, so speks withoutin faile,
 For yonge and olde and every manir age
 It was a worlde to loke on her visage. 539

Thus coming forth to sit in her estate,
 In her presence we kneled down everychone,
 Presenting our byllis; and wote ye what?
 Ful humbly she toke hem by one and one:
 When we had done than came they al anone
 And did the same eche after her manere,
 Kneling at ones and risinge al in sere. 546

When this was don, and she set in her place,
 The chambirlaine she did unto her cal,
 And she godely coming to her space,
 Of her entent knowinge nothing at al,
 Voyde backe the prese (quod she) up to the wall,
 Make large rome, but loke that ye do not tary,
 And take these byllis to the secretary. 553

The chambirlaine did her commaundement,
 And came againe as she was byd to do,
 The secretary there beyng present
 The byllis were delivered her also,
 Not onely ours but many othir mo,
 Than the lady with gode advise againe
 Anone with al callid her chambirlaine. 560

We wol (quod she) the first thing that ye do
 The secretary ye make come anone
 With ther billis, and thus we wil also
 In our presence she rode 'hem everychon,
 'That we may takin gode advise theron
 Of the ladies that ben of our counsaile;
 Loke this be done withoutin any faile.

567

When the chambirlaine wiste of her entent
 Anone she did the secretarye call;
 Let your billis (quod she) be here present,
 My lady' it wil. Madame, (quod she) I shal.
 And in presence she wil that ye 'hem call.
 With right gode wil I am redy (quod she)
 At her plesure, whan she commaundith me.

574

And upon that was made an ordinaunce
 They that came first ther byllis shulde be red,
 Ful gentilly than said Perseveraunce,
 Refon it wil that they were sonist spedde;
 Anone withal, upon a tapet spredde,
 The secretarye layde 'hem downe echone;

581

Our byllis first she redde tho one by one.

The first lady bering in her devise
Sans que jamays, thus wrote she on her byl,
 Complaining sore, and in ful pitous wise,
 Of promisse made with faithful hert and wyll,
 And so brokin ayenst al manir skil,
 Without deserte alwaies on her partic,
 In this matir desiring remedye.

Following her word was in this wise,
And thus she did complaine,
And be guerdoned for her service
Like as she that toke the paine,
Coude in no wise her restraine,
She sewe until her presence,
To havin recompence. 595
More, to speke of othir twaine,
Wrote aftir her fantasy
Her, and for to tel you plaine
It was ful pitous verily,
And there was grete reson why:
Sombre in this matere
The processe al in fere. 602
As made complaininge in her gise,
Joye; her comforte, and gladnesse,
For in no manir wise
In no point of stablenesse;
Wele, out of al sikirnesse,
Besirring of her high grace
Her remedy in this case. 609
Made her bil, and thus she said,
Ife, There as she lovid best,
If she were wrothe or wele apaide,
Ife whan that she wole fainest,
Ife she was in very ernest;
Orde, as ferforth as I wote,
Here, right thus she wrote. 616

And upon that she made a great request
With heart and wil, and al that might be done,
As until her that might refresh it both,
For in her minde there might she find it sure
The remedy of that which she had bene,
Reherfing that that she had faine before,
Beseeching her it might be so no more.

And in like wise as they had done before
The gentyl women of our company
Put ther byllis; and for to tell you more,
One of them wrote *C'est sans dire* verily,
And her matere wholly to specify
Within her byl she put it in writinge,
And what it said ye shall yhave knowinge.

It said, God wote, and that ful pitously,
I yke as she was disposid in her herte,
No misfortune that she toke grevously,
Al one to her was the joy and the smerte,

**Sometime no thanke for al her gode deserte,
Othir comferte she wantid none coming;
And so usid it grevid her nothing;**

Desiring her and lowly beseeching,
That she wolde for her seke a bettir way,
As she that had yben her daies lyving
Stedfast and trewe, and wil be so alway:
Of her felawe somewhat I shal you say;
Whose byl was red the nexte forthe withal,
And what it ment reherfin you I shal.

En Dieu est she wrote in her devise,
 id thus she said withoutin any faile,
 r trouthe ne might be takin in no wise,
 ke as she thought, wherfor she had mervaile,
 r trouth somtyme was wont to take availe
 every mattere, but al that' is ago,
 e more pyte that it is suffrid so. 651

Moche more there was, wherof she shulde complain,
 t she thought it to gret an encombraunce
 moche to write, and therfore in certain
 God and her she put all her assiaunce,
 in her worde is made a remembraunce,
 seching her that she wolde in this case
 ewe unto her the favour of her grace. 658

The thirde she wrote reherfing her grevaunce,
 , wote ye what a pitous thing to here?
 r as me thought she felt grete displeaunce,
 e might ryght wel perceve it by her chere;
 id no wondir, it fate her passyng nere,
 t lothe she was to put it in writinge,
 t *Nede wol havin course in every thinge.* 665

Soyes assuré, this was her word certain,
 d thus she wrote within a litil space;
 ere she lovid her labor was in vaine,
 he was set al in anothir place,
 humilly desiring in that case
 ne gode consorte her sorowe to appese,
 at she might livin more at hert'is ese. 672

Whencefore to me
I am bound to say you is a
That she would know her gods

Ye have referred me there to
But now let it somewhat of ye
I have to say, parvantage ye
I have to say you while I am
I have to say knowledge perde
But that I say in truth, and
The time is come it is my name

And we have seen that ye is
I have to say, when ye have
Now gods, and on; I have ye
I have to say, it is not yet
I have to say, ye were by reason
And that it is said, witho

Nothing is left as dead
I have to say of my face

We thankid her in our most humble wise
Our felawship eche one by one assent,
Submittinge us lowly til her service,
For as we thought we had our travaile spent
In soche wise as we heldin us content;
Than eche of us toke othir by the sleve,
And forth withal as we shulde take our leve.

Al sodainly the watir sprange anon
In my visage, and therewithal I woke :
Where am I now ? thought I ; al this is gone,
Al masid ; and up I began to loke :
With that anon I went and made this Boke,
Thus simpilly reherfing the substaunce,
Bicause it shulde not be' out of remembraunce.

Now verily your dreame is passing gode,
And worthy to be had in remembraunce,
For though I stand here as long as I stode

It shulde not to me be none excombraunce,
I toke therin so inly grete plesaunce ;
But tel me now what ye the boke do cal,
For I muste wete. Wyth right gode wyl ye shal ;

As for this boke, to say you very right,
And of the name to tel you' in certainte,
L'assemble de Dames, thus it hight.
How thinkin ye ? That name is gode parde.
Nowe go ; farewell ; for they cal astir me
My felawes al, and I must astir sone :

Rede wel my dreame, for now my tale is done.

Finis.

CONTENTS.

	Page
ument of faire Creseide,	5
nde of good Women,	27
nde of Cleopatra Quene of Egypte,	48
nde of Thisbe of Babylone,	53
nde of Dido Quene of Carthage,	61
nde of Hyppipyle and Medea,	77
nde of Lucrece of Rome,	88
nde of Ariadne of Athens,	96
nde of Philomela,	108
nde of Phyllis,	114
nde of Hypermnestra,	123
of Women,	127
Dame fans Mercy,	133
mble of Ladies,	167

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